

THE
RELIGIOUS MONITOR,
OR
Evangelical Repository.

NO. 8.

JANUARY, 1829.

VOL. V.

Original Communications.

FOR THE RELIGIOUS MONITOR.

ON TRYING PROVIDENCES.

[Continued from page 63.]

The trials to which God subjects his people in this world shall not be in vain. The word that proceedeth out of his mouth shall not return unto him void. They will bring to light some hidden evil of the heart or life; will purge the soul from the love of some sin—weaken the power of indwelling corruption, and direct the mind and heart more steadfastly to holiness and to heaven, though it may not always be visible to the afflicted themselves. We may see the truth of this instanced in the case of the church of old. After the Babylonish captivity she did not return any more to the practice of idolatry. It was stated, in a former paper on this subject, that the constitution of the visible church is now, in every part, subjected to trial. If so, we have this to comfort us, that it shall not be in vain. It may cost the friends of truth and righteousness many a painful struggle; the wood, hay and stubble, *will* be burnt up; the dross *will* pass off, and it may be, many individual professors and churches now existing, with it; but not an *atom* of the gold *will* perish, and the church will eventually come forth from the present struggle with a brighter lustre than before. This has been the issue of former trials, and the Oath of our Covenant God stands pledged to the glorified Redeemer for its being the result of all her present and all her future trials, till she comes forth from her last one with the lustre of immortal glory.

Let no man's heart fail him on viewing the present state of things. Let no friend to a faithful Testimony be discouraged.—The corruptions, against which the present trial is intended to operate, are deeply rooted, and of long standing. They are the

dregs of many generations; and, therefore, before they will be removed, it is very likely that the time will be long, or the fire of His Judgments will burn with a terrible fierceness; but our labour and travail, in behalf of truth and purity, shall not any of it be in vain.

It was stated in a former paper, that all trials are either on points of *faith* or *practice*. Some remarks have been already made on the former: I now submit a few thoughts on the latter.

Were trials confined to points of *faith*, or to the formal profession of them, neither the believer's corruptions, nor the profane world, nor Satan, would much complain. God and his cause would nominally bear the sway, but their interests would continue perfectly secure. If religion would but confine its demands to *doctrines* and *professions*, even the Devil and the world would be good neighbours to it. And here, there is a snare, into which, it is feared, many fall. They make a bold stand for the truth, and with this are satisfied. Their devotion is cold and formal. They are not over scrupulous about the paying of baptismal vows, or the religious instruction of their children. They can seize on worldly gain, without minutely weighing motives, or seeking the fairest means. They can go more than half way to filthy, obscene, or profane conversation—can drink almost, if not altogether, to intoxication, if only it can be concealed, or if a plausible excuse can be made. While one would imagine that the zeal of his house was eating them up, they are giving religion a stab under the fifth rib. Perhaps all, who ought to apply these remarks, do not intend to wound Christ's cause, nor think that they are so doing; but, overlooking their trials on *practice*, they have fallen into the snares of *head religion*, to which their conversation is habitually giving the lie. In their way of religion, the virtue of Christ's blood is not shown—the regenerating power of the holy Ghost is not made manifest—the design of the gospel is not gained—the works of the Devil are not destroyed, and God is not glorified.

The truth demands obedience—the obedience of the whole man. It requires a total change of heart and life. Where it bears the sway, it turns every thing upside down: It expels indwelling sin from the throne of the heart, and crucifies it with all its affections and lusts: It calls off the desires and affections from things on the earth, and directs them to things spiritual and eternal: It will have all old things done away, and all things become new. The day in which the government of truth is set up in the soul, must, therefore, be a day of sore trial. It was grievous to Abraham to cast out the bond woman and her son,

but how much more so to the soul, to cast off forever, its beloved idol, *self*—to vomit out the *sweet morsels* which it had rolled with delight under the tongue. It debates within itself—hesitates, halts, and is frequently on the point of saying—“We will not have this truth to reign over us.” “Let us return back into Egypt.” Or, as they said to Moses—“Ye take too much upon you.” The crucified flesh cries out—“Ye have killed the people of the Lord.” O, could the soul but remember, at these times of agony and conflict, that this is its trial, ordered by its loving, faithful God, and fasten on the promise—“My grace shall be sufficient for thee,” what relief and consolation might it find!

It may be proper to mention, the general design of God in sending trials to his people on obedience, is the same as in trials on faith, some of which were specified. It is not to find out what is in man, but to make man find out himself—the strength of his lusts—the weakness of his faith, and his need of more grace. It is to free his church of carnal, nominal professors, and expose hypocrites to the world. I would premise the following things.

First: That some part of the divine will ought to be constantly before us, as the rule of present conduct. This may be inferred from the character given to the word—“It is a light to the feet and a lamp to the path;” and also from this—that it “thoroughly furnishes the man of God for every *good word and work*.” To discover that part, and faithfully apply it, is the sum of Christian wisdom and prudence, in every trial. This requires the utmost diligence in searching out and treasuring up the contents of the word in the memory and heart.

Second: That indwelling sin, in the shape of some lust of the flesh, or lust of the eye, or pride of life, is ever ready to rise up against *that part*; and under some pretence to duty, or interest, moves us against obeying it. It reasons against it—complains of it—or seeks delay, or makes us forget, or draws away and entices the mind to something else. And

Third: The occasion, time, place, and other circumstances, are constantly so ordered by God in his providence, that our obedience to *that part*, must be in direct opposition to some lust or propensity of the old man. Herein he acts sovereignly, yet always most graciously; not suffering his people to be tempted above what they are able to bear; and with the temptation making a way of escape. But here arises continual contest between the flesh and Spirit; and consequently *trial* of the strength of both, and of which of them for the time prevails: and so, we call it a *Trying Providence*.

Many will not believe these things, who yet profess to believe a particular overruling providence, which certainly implies as much. Therefore, to them, the providence of God appears, for the most part, without either design or meaning, dark and perplexing. They see neither trial nor snare in the greatest part of their lives. The benefit of the one, is unknown to them; the danger of the other, is not apprehended. They pass on, and are punished, yet understand it not. However, the truth of these is certainly implied in Christ's own words—"Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life:" It is the way in which the saint walks with God—the way of new obedience. Do not these words imply that the *entrance* into the way of life, is a trial? That it requires pressing even to violence? That before we be small enough to pass, we must put off the old man with his overgrown lusts and swollen pride, and that we must become as a little child? It is easier for a camel to pass through a needle's eye, than, with *but one* ruling lust, to pass this gate. Will any, that understands these words, say, that when an entrance is gained, the trial is over? Young converts are sometimes tempted to think so, and that they have reached the very threshhold of heaven: but alas! they find it far otherwise. "Narrow is the way;" so narrow, that not one hairs breadth is left for the old man to set his foot on. And since he must needs be along with us, while in the body, we have to *bear him* all the way as a heavy burden; and consequently be in continual danger of inclining to the right or left, or of falling backward or forward. And moreover, as it is in the natural case, so here, the sense of weight increases as we advance on our way. Surely this is enough to make one cry—"O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Over this *strait gate*, it is written, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross *daily* and follow me—if any man come to me and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple—and whoso doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." This is what the believer has to be doing from the day of his entrance, until his earthly house be dissolved. He, then, who finds not a cross, in other words, a *trial*, to bear every day of his life, has either mistaken his road or fallen asleep on the way. More particularly,

1. To obey the divine command, it is often necessary to part with relations and friends. "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house," is, in providence, often said to Abraham's children, as well as to himself; some-

times in order to go forth and preach the gospel; sometimes in order to support a testimony to the present truth; and sometimes to enjoy the ordinances. This is a trial to natural affection, especially to a person of tender feelings. The whole heart and soul of man rises up and pleads against compliance here, and it too frequently succeeds. Sometimes, for the ends mentioned, we are obliged to *oppose* relatives, and separate from their fellowship. "The son has to rise up against his father, and the daughter against her mother," &c. In some respects, this is a heavier trial. Sometimes those who are fathers in age, in experience, in wisdom, are left so far as to give the weight of their character to the passing current of some defection; and duty requires that they be opposed and withheld to the face. This is a sore trial. Temptation pleads many things which nothing but a stern regard to the authority of our Master in heaven can refuse. Such as the duties of inferiors to superiors, gratitude, friendship, &c.—And here, multitudes fail, and virtually call the learned, respectable, or aged, their master, contrary to Christ's express command. Such ought to take heed lest they forsake the living God altogether, and worship the golden calf because *Aaron* made it.—Frequently we are called to part with friends and relations in death, to be content to want them; to approve of God's taking them away, and to believe, that in so doing, he is both faithful and merciful; and to make it our own deed, by giving them up to him. This is a painful trial; and to bear it aright, requires not only confidence in the rectitude of the Divine conduct, in doing what pleases him with his own, but that the soul rest in God, as its own God, with the views and feelings of the Psalmist, when he said—"Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon the earth whom I desire besides thee?" Then it can say—"The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord."

2. It is not uncommon to meet with men, who, without much provocation, will revile and curse, perhaps only because we have spoken truth between man and man, or done the office of a just judge, or because we hold fast a scriptural profession. This is ordered to try us on several divine commands, such as—"Bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you—not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing." In some cases, this trial is peculiarly severe. It is hard for a brother, in the bowels of Christian affection, giving a salutary advice, to be railed on; and harder still, for an affectionate wife to be abused and insulted, because she hates drunkenness; and hints, in the most delicate manner, the necessity of caution.

It is hard for a court of Christ to be so treated, because they administer faithfully the laws of his house. This trial often comes by surprise, and with such violence, that if great humility, patience, and self-denial, do not keep the door of the lips, we shall in one moment be up in a flame of resentment. For such a time, the counsel of the wise man, is adapted—"Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life—put away from thee a froward mouth; and perverse lips, put far from thee." Many take excuse for retaliation from the very circumstance in the case which makes it a trial, viz. that they were abused for well doing. This is the very thing which we are commanded to suffer patiently. Consider Christ before the council. "When he was reviled, he reviled not again."

3. We shall have but little intercourse in the religious world, if we meet not Christians of small attainments and weak faith.—God has ordered this meeting to try, whether we that are strong, will bear the infirmities of the weak, and not please ourselves.—Our pleasure we naturally consider a matter of great value; and if grace has not subdued *self*, and raised our love to God, our meeting with such people will prove, that we will both "eat flesh and drink wine," if it should destroy him for whom Christ died. The attention of the strong is occupied with the idea of their own superiority, and their neighbour's weakness: they are so convinced of the *lawfulness* of their pleasure that it never occurs to them, that providence has brought these people in their way to prove the measure of their self-denial, and how far they can bear, for Christ's sake, with his weak members. Consequently they lose the benefit of the trial, fall into the snare, and greatly injure christian fellowship. Out of many, I shall instance one case of self-pleasing, which has done great mischief, both to weak and strong, viz.—the various fashionable modes of conducting public praise. These are, at the most, on the part of these who favour them, *only to please*. All that has been, or can be said, in their behalf, amounts to nothing more; unless they will claim equal authority with the holy Ghost to order *repeats of words*, and *HALF-WORDS*, where the sovereignty of their musical ear is pleased to put them. But who can tell the amount of discord and bitter feeling, created by this *self-pleasing*? Of how many families has it broken the harmony? How many sermons has it lost? How many congregations has it divided and destroyed? If such brethren must have it conceded to them that they are *strong*, it is clear that the Devil gets all the benefit of it. Let such learn to pray in earnest for the spirit of that verse—"It is good neither to

eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak." Rom. xiv. 21.

4. We sometimes meet with ungrateful persons, who, like the grave, are ever crying, give, give, and ever complaining of coldness and inattention—all they have received is nothing. Such conduct is in itself disgusting, and to benefactors provoking, but still we ought to remember, that providence has cast them in our way, to try and prove us, on the principle of that text—"Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them—when thou doest thine alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth,"—and to make it appear whether it was in obedience, or only for a name, or in compliance with natural sympathy, that our bonny was bestowed. This trial serves a double purpose. God brings such people before us as a mirror in which we may see a little of our own face: for it is impossible for them to exceed, in their ingratitude to us, the measure of our ingratitude to God. Happy is he who can calmly use them for this purpose. In spite of all their ingratitude he will receive a benefit from them which they cannot withhold. "If ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners do even the same thing—do good and lend, hoping for nothing again, and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the highest; for he is kind to the unthankful and the evil."

5. In this world of misery and distress, we frequently find the poor and needy. This is ordered to try us on such a text as—"He that giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord, and that which he hath given will he repay him again." Give, and it shall be given unto you." Can we find it in our hearts to obey this? Will we take the Lord for the poor man's surety, or not? If the love of God dwell not in the heart, we will shut up our bowels of compassion from him, and dismiss him with plenty of good words—"Be ye warm, be ye clothed, be ye fed." If the love of money hold possession of our soul, we will "pass by on the other side." But if the command of Christ be, in our view, paramount to every other consideration, we will, according to our ability, give.

6. Poverty is the lot of very many of God's people. Of so many, that their denomination is taken from it—"Hath not God chosen the poor of this world," &c. I speak not of the idle, the prodigal, or vicious, whose poverty is the fruit of their own doings, but of the temperate, sober, industrious and economical, and yet poverty is their daily trial. It is to try them on that command—"Take no thought for to-morrow, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithall ye shall be clothed.—Consider the ravens, which have neither store house nor barn—

the lilies of the field, which toil not neither do they spin," &c. If they look not habitually with a confident trust to the God of providence, as their provident father, they will show themselves discontented with their condition, fretful and desponding; or, that they are swallowed up of excessive concern about to-morrow; or, they will leave the path of present duty to seek relief. But if they be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, they will seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness *first*, their poverty notwithstanding. The widow will be forward to cast in her two mites, to show her love to the gospel. The head of the family *will have* time to worship God morning and evening. If envy be the besetting sin of the poor man, the prosperity of his neighbour will set him a grudging. If he is much inclined to greed, he is in danger of putting forth his hand and stealing; and in case that the fear of shame, or (which is better) the fear of God, should restrain him from the outward act, yet may he steal in his heart. Poverty, if sanctified, is the means of greatly increasing trust and hope in God; but where this is not the case, the very opposite is likely to be its effect. It is easy, in the midst of plenty, to be persuaded that we have great trust in God's goodness and care; but let some sudden reverse reduce us down to the very letter of the petition—"Give us this day our daily bread," and we shall quickly discover, that our trust extended little farther than the sight of our eyes. For all such cases of trial, this word might be suitable—"Be content with such things as ye have, for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

7. Riches are a greater trial still; because they place at command so much gratification to the carnal mind. We are so much the creatures of sense, that it is extremely difficult to have riches and not to trust in them. And he who trusts in them, first forgets, and then denies God, and says—"Who is the Lord?"—They create so great a difference from the state of the poor man, that they prove a strong excitement to pride and vanity. The rich man is so above the straits and hardships of the poor, that he is in a great measure disqualified for sympathising with the latter—"The rich answer roughly." They afford so many means for gratifying ambition, that ere ever he is aware, the rich man is absorbed in schemes and business, till he has not a moment or a thought to bestow on the world to come. It was a prayer dictated by wisdom—"Give me neither poverty nor riches;" but very few are inclined to present it. If the following scriptures be duly considered, we must be convinced that he who is waxen rich occupies a perilous situation—that snares innumerable beset

his path—and if he falls not into some of them, more grace must have been given him than falls to the common lot of believers. “There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing—He that maketh haste to be rich, shall not be innocent—The abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep—But wo unto you that are rich, ye have received your consolation—The rich man is wise in his own conceit—They that will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.” The man who can possess riches and keep out of these, stands in this trial; but he who considers himself as only steward of his riches, and employs them as one that must give an account, comes off with great gain. He to whom God has given riches has much need to watch against their fascination, as against the charming of a serpent.

8. It is hardly possible at present to go into any circle of society, or engage in any line of business, without being frequently solicited to intemperance; not by those only who are themselves the slaves of it, but by men reputed sober—men professing godliness. If we go to enquire for a neighbour’s welfare, we are presented with the intoxicating liquid; if we go to labour in the field, we meet it there; if to transact business, it is there; and if to the court of justice, *even there* spirits must have a place. This we must view as a dispensation of the all-wise God, to try us on all those injunctions, laid on the followers of Christ, to be sober and temperate, and whether we eat or drink, to do all to the glory of God; and especially to try us on *watching* unto the observation of these; for without the utmost vigilance the man of *sober habits*, is almost in constant danger. This is one of the trials of the present time. And the snare offers so many fair reasons, and pleads so many fair and unexpected examples, that a man is caught, unless he “watch and be sober” continually. It is said—“They that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that are drunken, are drunken in the night;” but this dreadful vice has now thrown off that mantle: It can, in the broad light of day—in any company—and on any occasion, lift up its bloated countenance, with *more* than swinish impudence. Isaiah complains that—“All tables were full of vomit, and that the priest and the prophet erred through strong drink.” But now, men of all ranks and professions are seen to stagger in their vomit, and the very **HIGH WAY** is polluted with it. If it is a duty neither to *eat flesh*, nor *drink wine*, when it would offend, stumble, or make a **brother** weak, much more is it due to *ourselves* to abstain from that **LITTLE** portion of spirits, falsely called a *refreshment*, which endangers our stumbling and falling to rise **NO MORE**. Can weightier

arguments be advanced for the use of ardent spirits, than for *flesh and wine*? Are we *more* bound to preserve a brother than *ourselves* from ruin? It cannot be. Therefore, when the danger of intemperance is so great as now it is every where, it is a sacred duty to the soul to deny the body refreshment of this nature.

[*To be continued.*]

FOR THE RELIGIOUS MONITOR.

STRICTURES

On a series of papers entitled "Brief historical Sketches of the Associate Reformed Church of North America," published in the Religious Examiner, a periodical work edited by the Rev. Samuel Findlay, and printed at Cadiz, Ohio.

[*Continued from page 202.*]

"They did not," continues the writer of the Sketches, "wish to conceal their sentiments on magistracy. They were in a great strait. They were as much opposed to the doctrine of the Confession, on magistracy, as were the Associate Reformed church. Candour, honesty, and a little self-denial, would have dictated the propriety of approving what the Associate Reformed Synod had done, and of copying their example. Had they done so, many tender consciences would have escaped severe stings of remorse." That the views of the Associate church, and of the Secession, from its commencement, respecting the statements of the Westminster Confession on the doctrine of magistracy, have been very different from the *plain sense* given of the reserved sections, by the writer of the Sketches, we hope we have, in a previous paper of this communication, successfully shown. The above philippic upon the Associate body, may, therefore, be suffered to pass without further comment. With regard to the stings of remorse with which so many tender consciences have been afflicted, for not concurring with the Associate reformed church in mutilating the Confession of the venerable body of divines at Westminster, for ourselves we have to say, that we have not heard of any; nor has any expression of them, that we have known, ever been exhibited to the public. But facts, that cannot be disputed, can be produced to prove, that not a few of those, who concurred with the Associate Reformed church in this deed, did suffer sever stings of remorse for doing so; nor could they obtain relief for these, until they had renounced the connection, and joined in fellowship with those maintaining a pointed testimony against this, and similar errors chargeable against the Associate Reformed church. Nor is this fact merely applicable to private members, many of whom have renounced

the connection to escape the stings of remorse, but also public teachers. And more had been added to their number, had not death, previous to their being able to carry their *avowed* intention into effect, terminated their earthly career. What the writer's design may be, in making such broad assertions, destitute of any proof to support them, we know not; but apprehend it to be none of the *kindest*. Much more of the same stamp follows.

"Had the Associate body," the writer remarks, "approved of what the Associate Reformed Synod had done, [he refers to the alterations made on the reserved sections,] and copied their example, they would have been relieved from all their inconsistencies at once; and it must ever appear astonishing to us that they did not. For they declare their agreement with all that our constitution contains, not only on magistracy, but every other tenet; whether respecting doctrine, worship, discipline or government, and this inconsistency has rendered them unpopular with the wise and the good who have seriously adverted to it."

The honest and faithful maintainers of the cause of truth, have never been a popular people. They are every where spoken against. Every epithet in the vocabulary of defamation, with which the writer of the Sketches seems to possess no inconsiderable acquaintance, is applied to them. They are stigmatised as bigots—as a narrow-minded, illiberal kind of people—superstitious in their attachment to the old way of their forefathers—their musty old covenants, &c. But this is just what the Spirit of God has foretold *such* may expect. 2 Tim. iii. 12. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution:" And a faithful maintenance of the truths of Christ, constitutes a more important part of *living godly*, than many seem to imagine. "If ye endure reproaches for the name of Christ, happy are you; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you." 1 Pet. iv. 14. It is comfortable that such a passage as the foregoing is to be found in the book of God. If, therefore, the Associate body has become unpopular, in the estimation of the wise and the good, for not approving of the conduct of the Associate Reformed Synod, and copying their example, in doing what we consider a mutilation of the Westminter Confession of Faith, we consider it no great proof either of their wisdom or goodness. But we consider this in the same light with some of the writer's other sweeping assertions: it has a place only in his imagination. He professes to be astonished, that while we approve of their constitution as containing nothing *contrary* to the truth, we did not unite with the Associate Reformed church, on it, as their common foundation; and presumes the only cause we could have for not

doing so, must have been a superstitious attachment to the Westminster Confession. But there is a very great difference between saying that a book contains no error, and that it contains enough of truth, which it cannot have, unless it have the *whole* of it, if it occupies the place of a professed standard of faith, whether designated by the name Constitution or fixed Testimony. The church stands to God in the relation of his witness.—Isaiah xliii. 10. “Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord.” Now, we all know that a witness, when legally called to bear testimony, is bound not only to declare the truth, but the *whole* truth; and if knowingly and intentionally he keeps back any part of the truth, he is as really guilty of perjury, as if he swore what was untruth. Now, if it is the duty of a witness, in cases of litigation among men, to deliver not only what is truth, but the *whole* truth, much more is it the duty of the church of God, considered under this character, when the cause of his truth is called in question. But it is not true that the Associate body gave, by their committee, an unqualified approbation of the present constitution of the Associate Reformed church, as containing for certain no tenet apprehended to be contrary to our received standards; as erasures are proposed. See communications of both committees on the subject. But though our committee had not made any such exceptions, and had said that they perceived no tenet in their constitution contrary to our standards, would this warrant the conclusion, that they must unite with the Associate Reformed church on the foundation of their constitution, otherwise be chargeable with a superstitious regard to the Westminster Confession of Faith. We think not; any more than a person’s approbating the testimony of a witness for having told the truth, so far as his knowledge of the subject extended, would involve an approbation of his testimony as a statement of the *whole* truth.—The constitution of the Associate Reformed church is perhaps not unsound, as far as it goes, with the exceptions above adverted to, but it does not go far enough; for it stops short of exhibiting the *whole truth*. Several important articles of truth, attained to by the Reformed Churches, are passed over in silence: not a syllable is said, so far as we know, respecting them: and if every article of truth is inestimably precious, both as respects the manifestation of the divine glory, and the sanctification and comfort of the church, this defect, in a book professing itself to be the standard of the Associate Reformed church, must be considered an evil of no small magnitude. In this respect, we consider it more defective than the first constitution; for though that contains only a brief summary of principles, yet what we consider as

two important articles of truth, are recognized in it, which are wholly passed over in the present constitution. These are the duties of *covenanting* and *testimony bearing*; articles of truth, which many, however much despised in our day, sealed with their blood.

We consider it exceptionable, also, in relation to two other points. These are occasional communion and the purchase of temporal benefits. In the first constitution, then, there is, though not in such definite terms as could have been wished, a tacit acknowledgment of the duty of covenanting. But in the overture, which may be considered as got up to serve the lack of a confession of faith, to which they could subscribe, and the Testimony of the Secession church, which they had now cast away from them, as a tale of other times, with which they have no concern, this duty is explicitly recognised, and the form of a bond drawn for the occasion of its observance. We shall quote the language at large; because many of the Associate Reformed brethren look upon covenanting as such an antiquated duty, that they cannot believe so enlightened and liberal a body as the Associate Reformed church has become, ever held it. In this deception they have been confirmed by certain faithless shepherds, who have not only turned their backs upon this ordinance of the God of heaven, but have, on more occasions than one, turned it into a subject of sport and railery.

In pages 101, 102, and 103, of the above mentioned document, are the following words: "The duty of covenanting with God is performed in every act of faith and repentance, in meditation, prayer, and receiving the sacraments, and indeed it is the life of every duty. But it has by common use been appropriated to vowed to the Lord of hosts. However, this differs from the former, only in being more external, explicit, and formal; for in every act of faith, there is a solemn and hearty acceptance of God, to be our God, and surrender of ourselves to be his, on the scheme of the gospel, and in the participation of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper. This act is very explicit, public and formal. In these institutions Christians express their union to Christ, and each other in him: nevertheless, on some particular occasions, they may also practice this by solemn, conjunct vowed unto the Lord. It is clear from reason, scriptural precepts, promises and prophecies, that this is sometimes the duty of the church in New Testament times. The particular seasons when God calls to the performance of this duty, seem to be, when the church is in imminent danger, from a general apostacy, or persecution—when under some heavy judgment—or when about to

implore some great deliverance—or when the deliverance hath been granted, and his Spirit poured out.

“It is clear, that covenanting with God and each other, in the manner above defined being an ordinance of the covenant of grace, must belong only to the church. It is an ecclesiastical, not a civil, ordinance; and must be practised by men, not in their civil but in their ecclesiastical capacity. Yet as the Christian religion recognises every lawful relation among men, whether natural or moral, a church consisting of fathers and children, magistrates and subjects, rulers and common citizens, those covenanting with God and each other, ought to view their covenant solemnly binding them to the faithful performance of the duties which they owe to each other in these relations.

“Christians in this transaction not only give themselves to the Lord, but as in baptism and the Lord’s supper, so in this, they give themselves and their children. We, then, as the children of covenanting ancestors, do acknowledge ourselves as dedicated to the Lord by their act, and engaged, by them, to serve him in every religious and moral duty.”

Then follows the form of a bond or engagement to duties. It is in these words: “We avouch the Lord to be our God, and in the strength of the grace laid up for us in Christ, we solemnly promise and vow, by the great name of the Lord our God, that we will endeavour to walk in his ways, and keep his commandments, and hearken to his voice; and particularly, that we will, by the Lord’s grace, continue and abide in the profession of the faith and the obedience of the gospel of Christ, in doctrine, worship, and government; and that we will, attending to our stations, places and callings, and the measure of knowledge given unto us, contend and testify against all contrary evils, errors and corruptions.”

In their act, likewise, respecting the religious connections of the Associate Reformed Synod, it is declared, that they bless God for the national covenant of Scotland, England and Ireland,—with respect to which, they say it is their opinion, that these covenants, as taking their national form and character from the established connexion between church and state in Britain, are not obligatory upon any other nation; but in relation to the religious parts of these covenants, in which the covenanters solemnly avouched the Lord to be their God and the God of their seed, and with the same solemnity surrendered themselves and their posterity unto him, promising and swearing that they would walk in his ways, and keep his commandments, they are obligatory on the posterity of those who entered into them, wherever scattered

over the world, even in virtue of the public solemn oath of their ancestors.

This last deed, if we mistake not, is nearly coeval with the former. It may, indeed, be said that the Overture, was only the doings of a committee, and never received the judicial sanction of the Associate Reformed church. This, it may be acknowledged, is a fact. But if the deed of a committee, formally chosen and appointed to such a work, contained any principles which they believed to be unscriptural, was it not their duty to correct these, or openly to order their committee to prepare a new draft, in which these should be expunged? But can it be plead that such a step, which they were under obligation to have taken, had these extracts, in their estimation, been unscriptural, was ever taken by them? No. It may be that they wished them to be understood as the expression of their sentiments, though they took good care not to commit themselves, by giving them their judicial sanction. Such a deed is a very convenient article, and can be shifted about as the wind blows. If you are in favour of covenanting, this document proves that it is one of our principles: If you are not, this document is of no account to support the charge that we hold covenanting to be a moral duty, for it was only the deed of a committee. A similar purpose of old served the Re-Exhibition. It was a tub thrown out to amuse the whale. The people could not think of being without a testimony, and those who knew no better, were pleased with this as one. It was a kind of harmless thing, that served to keep a great many tender spirits in good humour with themselves. But if there was any thing in it that the less rigid did not like it was soon stripped of its authority—it was only the deed of a committee. But this same overture has had a far better share of fortune, than the generality of such ill-fated deeds; for in the paper of grievances published, we believe, under the auspices of the Associate Reformed Synod of the West, it is complimented as the most satisfactory of all their publications. If it is so, what then must we think of a church, who, in the standard of her public and avowed principles, says not one syllable about this important duty,—that requires no recognition of it as a term of fellowship in the enjoyment of either seal of God's covenant; but who tolerates the open and avowed denial of it, as a duty obligatory upon the church in New Testament times? Need the writer of the Sketches wonder, that though the Associate Synod, by the communication of their committee, said that they perceived no tenet taught in their constitution contrary to our received standards,

yet could not coalesce with them, on this foundation, leaving out this important article of truth ?

Some other defects will be noticed in our next.

AMICUS VERITATIS.

Selections.

THE ANXIOUS ENQUIRY OF THE AWAKENING SINNER.

A SERMON,

By the Rev. A. Bruce, late minister of the gospel, Whitburn, Scotland.

Acts xvi. 29, 30.

(Concluded from our last.)

EXHORTATION.

1st. There are some who remain not only strangers to a gracious change, but void even of that previous concern and fear that often seize the sinners and hypocrites in Zion, who yet are only almost Christians: who will glory in their insensibility, and be thankful that they never were disquieted about spiritual interests, as others have been, whose fears they impute to melancholy, to ignorance, or to fancy and enthusiasm; who strive to fortify themselves more and more against serious impressions of this kind; and when any of them hear all the words and curses that are written in the book of the divine law, ‘will bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine own heart, to add drunkenness to thirst.’ Let such consider, that this state of mind, so far from being desirable, is one that is most deplorable: that peace and security of which they boast, is one of the most hopeless and fearful symptoms of their being yet far from safety, and that the wrath of God, though unfelt, unseen, ‘abideth upon them.’ A sleeping and seared conscience is a deadly plague, foreboding destruction. Jehovah has written out in the plainest terms, and in flaming characters, the doom of such a man; ‘The Lord will not spare him, but the anger of the Lord shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in his book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven; and the Lord shall separate him unto evil.’ Deut. xxix. 19—21. Such, above all others, have cause to be alarmed. There may be much ignorance, gross misapprehensions, much enthusiasm, melancholic and fanciful terrors, often prevailing with persons awakened to serious concern: but these are not to be viewed as a bug-bear to frighten persons from religious exercise, nor made a

pretence for casting off all fear, and indulging in levity, and profane ridicule. The word and threatenings of the Lord are no vain things, nor will his wrath and judgments be found at last fanciful bug-bears. Guilt, death, judgment, eternity, are serious matters; and true religion must always be a most serious, and at the same time a most reasonable thing. What more reasonable than to fear that great and dreadful name, THE LORD OUR GOD? What more reasonable, than to be anxious about the enjoyment of his favour, which is better than life, and to escape his vengeance, who after he has killed the body, can cast both soul and body into hell fire? What more reasonable, or needful, than to be impressed with his authority and laws, and the account that all men must give to him of all the deeds they have done? What a more proper object of serious scrutiny than the many crimes they have committed against him, every one of which subjects to capital punishment, and to know how their accounts stand with God, the judge of all? What more reasonable and prudent, than to foresee coming evil and to fly from it while it is practicable? while he acts the part of a fool, who despises all warnings, and passes on till he is punished.

In order to be cured of a dangerous malady, is it not better to submit to a little short pain in searching and probing the sores, than to apply opiates to deaden feeling, and to prefer a little ease for the present, while the wounds more and more fester, and the disease becomes incurable? Is it not more eligible, when a house is in flames, that persons should make some attempt, though with risk and fear, to escape, and be saved through smoke and fire, than to lay fast asleep on a bed, till they be consumed to ashes?

What meanest thou then, O sleeper, in such a perilous situation? Arise and call on thy God. Put the question in earnest, while it may avail thee, 'Men and brethren, ministers, all ye who fear God, what must I do to be saved?' While you defer this concern, and put away all serious thoughts upon this subject, though you may reckon yourselves the wise and prudent of this world, and dream of nothing but peace, you, and not the souls awakened and exercised to godliness, are the dupes of a deceived imagination, and of Satanic delusion. 'There is no peace, saith God, to the wicked.' Habitual and avowed indifference about religion, especially when attended with profane scoffing at it, and a sarcastic malignity against those who shew greater strictness and seriousness in it than themselves, though they were persons otherwise civil, sober, just, and charitable, would be sufficient evidence that they 'have no part, or lot, in this matter of salvation;' how much more when other open heinous sins are joined.

therewith, as is usually the case, swearing, drunkenness, avarice, violence, uncleanness, lying and the like? The sins of these men, like the blood of Jerusalem of old that was set on a rock, may be found without search, and they 'go before them to judgment:' so that all who see them, will have reason to be alarmed for them, and to fly, while they alone are stupidly unmoved; and though the fire be kindled, 'and burning round about them, yet they know it not, or lay it not to heart.' Let such, then, ponder well the matter; look into the book of the Lord and read; look into your own hearts and lives, review the various articles of indictment drawn up against you, and the abundance of proof by which they are all supported: survey the many witnesses that are cited, and ready to rise against you in judgment, by whom you must be convicted. Look forward to what is hastening upon you; and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, take warning, and fly from the wrath to come. Listen to the most searching sermons, to the ministers, and Christians that will deal most plainly and freely with you: read the most rousing books that may tend to impress convictions on your mind, and a concern about salvation. Attend to the monuments that are on record of divine judgment upon obdurate sinners, and of sovereign mercy, and surprising conversions, both in scripture, and in other well attested accounts. Bethink yourselves, while it is not yet altogether out of season, lest you should at last make the dismal reply, that a noted infidel, in modern days, is said to have done to one who asked him on his death bed, what he now thought of this scheme? 'Ah!' said he, 'it is too late to think.' Though you may neglect to search out your sins, 'be assured your sins will find you out:' though you may forget God, he cannot forget you, nor any of your works: though he bear with much long suffer-suffering, harden not your heart. He laughs at every secure and scornful sinner, 'for he sees his day a coming.' 'Despisest thou, O man! the riches of his goodness, long-suffering and forbearance? not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance; but after thy hardness and impenitent heart, thou treasurest up to thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of his righteous judgment.' Rom. ii. 4, 5. These things 'thou hast done,' says he, 'and I have kept silence; thou thoughtest I was such an one as thyself, and did approve thy sin; but I will sharply reprove thee, and order thy transgression before thy sight: Consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.' Ps. 1. 21, 22.

2dly, There are others who formerly may have been awakened to some sense of their sin and danger, and may still occasionally

feel some uneasy apprehensions on account of them, which are but slight and transient, as to which they get their minds easily quieted again, without being attended with any real change, or sincere desire after salvation. They will not pretend to deny the charge that they are sinners, and at times may be very liberal in acknowledgments of the wrong course of life they have pursued, or of particular transgressions, on account of which they may seem heartily to condemn and bewail themselves: yet they are far from being thoroughly convinced, or rendered truly humble and contrite. Vague and general thoughts or passing acknowledgments they think sufficient, and resting in these, they will return to folly with greater freedom, and soon regain their security. The intrusive thoughts they will strive to oppose, or to expell them again as soon as possible. They have various shifts to which they have recourse to evade the force of convictions, and to prevent their effect.

But let such beware of resisting the light and challenges of their own minds, or the motions of the Holy Spirit, lest by continuing to do so, both of them should become extinct. 'Quench not the Spirit.' Let them be tender of these, as they would be of the apple of the eye, or of the life of their own souls. These are critical times of a person's life, when these are felt, on which his future peace, and everlasting welfare or ruin may greatly depend. Weary not out your salutary monitors, by evasions and delays, by postponing such an urgent matter to some other day; as Felix did, when he was made to tremble, 'when Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come;—saying, Go thy way for this time, at a more convenient season I will call for thee.' This is a business that requires haste, a speedy resolution, and a direct answer. Let such fear lest if present convictions be stifled, or suffered to die away without effect, they may never again revive, or if they do, may be attended with double terror, and less hope of a successful issue. Let them know, that a relapse into security after some awakening will make their case worse than before, and throw them into a more profound lethargy: sin will acquire a greater ascendancy, the opposition and struggle will become less and less; the way of destruction become more smooth, and they will run in it with a more rapid career.

Under inward uneasiness and trouble about spiritual concerns seek not after physicians of no value, nor apply palliative and unsuitable remedies, that can only conceal the disease or aggravate it. Think not to fly from the presence of the Lord, and to forget the load of sin that is greater than you can bear, by rush-

ing into a perpetual hurry of business, or wandering up and down, as Cain, who went out and built a city. Think not, by the noise of mirth and company, to still the loud clamours within, or to drown the alarming noise of the breaking waves and water-spouts of wrath, in which you are ready to be engulphed. Call not for the sound of the viol or harp, as Saul did, when the evil spirit from God troubled him, as if these could charm, and effectually allay the sadness of the wounded spirit and the remorse of an evil conscience. Beware of drinking deeper draughts of carnal and criminal pleasures, of flying to cups of wine, and bowls of strong drink, or of swallowing with greater greediness the deadly potion of sin, which your knowledge and experience tell you to be evil, and bitter as gall and wormwood. If these things for a time may deaden the sense of danger, and make persons forget their spiritual misery, it is only to produce afterwards a more painful awakening and remembrance.

There are many shifts to which sinners under the means of conviction fly,—false pretexts which the deceitful heart would avail itself of, to ward off the sharp arrows, and to prolong its quiet. They are so various they cannot be particularly enumerated, and against all which they need to be warned, and against some of the more common and more specious, those who deal faithfully with souls have given plain and frequent warning.—When the sinner who would fly from the word of God, is pursued and narrowly searched out in all his retreats and lurking places, how false his coverings are, and how feeble his defence, against the fear of perishing, may be made sufficiently to appear. The following may only be briefly mentioned, to put gospel-hearers on their guard. There are few of them who avowedly profess to disbelieve, or doubt of the doctrines clearly taught in revelation, and of the capital one in particular, that ‘all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;’ they will not pretend to be excepted from the universal charge. But in the acknowledged general truth, they find one of the first pretences, for entertaining extenuating and slighter thoughts of their own particular guilt, and a reason for being less apprehensive of the consequences. 1st. It is true, they will say, we are sinners in common with all mankind: this is the general character or common lot of all; they consider it rather as their misfortune than their crime; and in this they have many companions, and God will deal no harder with them than with the many millions of the human race. But how foolish is it to think that sin is a less evil because it is common, or that condemnation is less to be dreaded because it is come upon all men; the multitude that share in these, do

not leave a less share to individuals, nor lighten the burden that lies upon them. Multitudes joining in sin, multiplies it, and companions in misery, aggravate it. Is epidemic disease less dangerous than one that is more rare, or raging pestilence, and wasting destruction less dreadful because thousands and ten thousands fall around by it, and because it spares no rank or age, the suckling or the man of gray hairs? Is death less terrible to particular persons, because it has passed upon all men, by a general law?

2. Some will plead, that they are at least not so guilty as many others: they are free from gross and flagitious crimes; and can adopt the language of the Pharisee, 'I am not as other men are, extorters, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.' Therefore they please themselves with the thought that they are in no danger of the wrath of God falling on them as on such transgressors. But though there be distinction among sinners, and different degrees of sins, where has the law made an exception in respect to obnoxiousness to wrath, or restricted its penalty death to these, or any other particular class? May not all know, that as the law which is exceeding broad, may be broken in instances innumerable, a mere freedom from some offences, is no exculpation, while many others are chargeable, yea, were it but one, a man is as far from being acquitted as if he had been 'guilty of all.' A mere negative righteousness, were it even more complete, where there has not been a continuance in all things required, by active obedience, avails nothing for justification, much less where a satisfaction for past transgressions is also demanded. They who compare themselves only with others, instead of comparing themselves with the perfect and spiritual law, may be righteous in their own blinded eyes, but are not accounted so the more of this, before God: nor are they nearer to the kingdom of heaven, whilst this is the estimate they make of themselves, than even those notorious sinners they mark out: The self-condemning publican 'went down to his house justified rather than the pharisee,' and the Lord told the men of that spirit, 'that publicans and harlots would enter into the kingdom of God before them.' There are other tracks in which men may walk more silently and less observed, besides the open high-way of destruction: the sins, or course of sinning, that are more silent, may often equal in magnitude, or even exceed the guilt of those who perpetrate some flagrant crimes. What an abundance of evil lies concealed in the human imagination and thoughts? What is said of the house of the wicked, may be equally affirmed of the heart, 'are there not treasures of wickedness there?'

Many criminal things are meditated, and formed there in embryo, that are never brought forth into act; and who but may see, that the seeds of all the crimes that others commit, may be found there, and that they would be ready, on similar temptations, to break forth. In this respect, who dare venture to say, that he is not as other men? And how many will be found partakers with flagitious sinners, who do not behold them with pity and regret, although they should not look upon their deeds with approbation, or enter into close society and alliance with such men?

3. In a similar spirit will others boast of, and rely upon, their having merely lived civilly and honestly among men; that they never all their life, as they think, did any man injury, or denied him his due: and therefore they hope, even in another world, all will be well. But what thank have they, or what recompence can they claim of God, for having acted a prudent part for themselves, and by avoiding disorder, and open injustice to men, escaped their censure or punishment; or maintained a good name, and advanced their own worldly interests? While they have acted in this manner, from low and selfish motives, without any principle of love either to God or man, verily they have already had their reward. But what is all this common civility and external equity with respect to fellow-men, while any are living without the fear of God, and continually denying his rights, and robbing him of all his dues? The first and highest required of men respect God; and when all regard to the first and great commandment, 'to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, and strength,' is cast off, what will this skeleton of decency and moral honesty avail as a plea at the bar of God, when 'he shall lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet?' When they are weighed in the ballance, they shall certainly be found wanting. Not only will the openly wicked and unrighteous be turned into hell, but all 'that forget to seek God;' and all 'who know not God and obey not the gospel of the Lord Jesus.' But those who think that they have never done wrong to any man, discover that they satisfy themselves with a very contracted system of social duties. In how many different ways may others be injured in thought, words, and deeds? In the want of a charitable frame of spirit towards them, in neglecting to shew regard to their interests, and to promote their temporal and spiritual good; in giving a bad example, that may cast a stumbling block before them, instead of discountenancing or reproving them in their sins, and instead of edifying them by living, not only soberly, and righteously, but godly, they do injury to them. All

who mind only earthly things, and who seek not the kingdom of heaven, caring for nothing relating to Christ and religion, they first wrong their own souls, and at the same time those of their neighbours.

4. Others will plead, that they cannot be ranked with such men: they live not as heathens: they have been baptized, and had a profession of religion from their youth, and have done more than many others. They have not only acted justly, but have been benefactors; and to morality and charity to men, have added the duties of piety towards God;—have prayed, fasted, regularly attended church, and joined in fellowship with Christians in all ordinances.—All this may be true; but all this belongs only to the form of godliness, which may be disjoined from its power;—giving persons ‘a name to live,’ with fellow Christians, while they may be dead. He is not an Israelite, who is so only in the flesh, nor is that circumcision that is outward. ‘in Christ Jesus neither circumcision, nor uncircumcision, availeth any thing, but a new creature.’ Have not such heard, that many of old time, ‘passed through the red-sea, and were under the cloud, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea,’ who perished in the wilderness. Have they not read in the new testament, of one who professed to believe in Christ, and was baptized, who still continued ‘in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity?’ Did not the foolish virgins, in the parable, take lamps, and join company with the wise, and go forth to meet the bridegroom, whose lamps went out in darkness,—and they were denied entrance at last when they knocked? Israel when degenerate, presumptuously said, ‘My God we know thee:’ and could cry as a security against judgment, ‘the temple of the Lord! the temple of the Lord! the temple of the Lord are these!’ And will not many say to Christ, at the last day, ‘Lord we have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets; in thy name we have cast out devils, and in thy name we have done many mighty works,’ whom he will not acknowledge for his? What works do ye more than others? Have not hypocrites, Pharisees, and formalists, done the same things; yea, many of them exceeded you? In multiplication of prayers, in fastings, in watchings, in rigorous penances, and austerities of life, have you not been far out-done by Mahometans, Gentoos, superstitious Greeks and papists? Wos are denounced against those who prayed ostentatiously in the synagogues, and at the corners of the streets, fasted twice a-week, and payed tithes of all:—who for a pretence made long prayers, while they were covetous, oppressors, and de-

oured widows houses; the same,' said the Lord, ' shall receive the greater damnation.'

5. Do some boast of their knowledge, and other eminent gifts, and that they have not laid up their talents in a napkin, but employed them for the edification of others: that their lips have instructed many, they have defended the truth, zealously opposed errors, superstition, and all false religion, and vehemently declaimed against the sins of others, and the corruptions of the age? Do they please themselves with the thought, that whatever come of the ignorant or indolent, instead of having any thing to fear, they may expect to hear nothing but, ' Well done good and faithful servant?'

Yet all that may be a vain boast; and in the end that man may be found a reprobate. Neither knowledge, nor faith, is of a saving nature, that makes not the heart better; that is not attended with humility and other proper fruits. ' Covet earnestly the best gifts,' said the apostle, ' yet shew I unto you a more excellent way. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal: And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing'. 1 Cor. xii. 31. and xiii. 1, 2. Balaam had knowledge, and called himself ' the man who saw the visions of God, and fell into a trance, having his eyes open:' and he took up repeatedly his parable in commendation of Israel and of Israel's God. Judas had knowledge, and preached the kingdom of heaven to others, but entered not in himself, but was a son of perdition. The unbelieving Jews boasted of ' a knowledge of the law,' and that they were capable of being instructors and guides to others: they condemned the poor heathens, while they, with all their light, were in practice no better than they. Many scribes and Pharisees were the titled doctors in the schools, and sat in Moses seat; they had a zeal of God, but a blind and mischievous one, ' not according to knowledge,' such a zeal as to make them compass sea and land to make a proselyte, such a zeal as made them ' persecute the church,' as Paul did; ' perceiving the mote in their neighbour's eye, but saw not the beam in their own.' Such are subjected to the severe judgment of God, and all under the Christian profession of a similar character. ' Behold thou art called a Jew, and restest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of

them that are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, and teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. Thou therefore who teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? &c. Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking of the law, dishonourest thou God.' Rom. ii. 17—23. The knowledge of many is like star-light, faint and feeble, that has no enlivening, warming, practical influence: or like a lamp hung up at a door, or in some outer apartment, which leaves the inner chambers of the house in darkness. It may diffuse light around, and be of much benefit to others, while the owner himself has little advantage by it. Many will descend to the regions of darkness with that lamp in their hand. The common, or spiritual gifts, on which some value themselves, and which make a fair show, are often like the whitening or garnishing of a sepulchre without, that within is full of corruption and dead mens bones. 'To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin,' and aggravated sin. 'For judgment,' said Christ, 'I am come into the world, that they who see not may see, and that those who see may be made blind.'

6. Others continue secure from the very opposite consideration: they think it may avail them to plead, that they are ignorant; they were never book-learned; they have not the same abilities, nor have had the same advantages that others have had; and therefore God will make allowance for them, and not exact a rigorous account at their hand. But can any speak thus, who live in a land where the gospel and bibles are common? where wisdom standeth and crieth, at the entering in of the gates, and in the streets of the city; saying, 'Whoso is simple let him turn in thither, and to him that lacketh understanding, Come eat of my bread?' Have any a right to speak so, who have a common capacity to understand and apply themselves to the affairs of this world, and who, perhaps, too, may be reckoned among the busy and wise about them? Does not the law speak in language plain and intelligible to all? And are not the doctrines of the gospel adapted to persons of every class and degree of capacity, and its voice directed to the learned and unlearned, to the Barbarian and Scythian as well as the Greek? Are not her words fitted for the instruction of every one who has an ear to hear, and for imparting the best and highest wisdom to the meanest, who are as babes just weaned from the breast? And have not many such, who may not have enjoyed greater, or equal advantages, hereby been made 'wise unto salvation?' The question is not about human learning or book-knowledge; this is of small consideration.

in matters relating 'to the kingdom of heaven,' and personal interest in it. God never saved any on account of it, nor damned any person for the mere want of it. He can sufficiently vindicate himself in the case of all, even of the unprofitable servant who had but one talent, from the charge of being 'a hard master, reaping where he had not sown, and gathering where he had not strawed.' He knows how, to make all just distinctions, and all proper allowances. 'To whom much is given, of him more will be required;' and he will proportion his punishments accordingly. But will this be an apology for wilful ignorance, contempt of spiritual knowledge, and the neglect of the means of it which have been granted? Will this palliate or extenuate the guilt of inattention, of 'turning away the ear from hearing the law,' of disaffection to divine truth, saying unto God, 'depart from us for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways? Will it excuse those who seek not after knowledge, nor cry for understanding, but on the contrary close their eyes that they may lie more quietly in the dark, and not be disturbed in their sinful ungodly course; and who daily sin against the light or knowledge they have? Even the heathen had more light than they followed, more knowledge than they practically improved; and 'because they liked not to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, and their foolish hearts were more and more darkened:—'They were alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that was in them.' They were punishable for the guilty effect, and also for the culpable cause from which it proceeded. And will not those who have enjoyed the greater 'light that has come into the world, and have loved darkness rather than light, because their, deeds are evil,' fall under the greater condemnation? 'If I had not come and spoken unto you' said the Lord, 'ye had not had sin, but now ye have no cloak for your sins.' Is it not the greatest folly to offer as an apology, what is of itself, declared to be a cause of ruin, and a just ground of condemnation? 'My people,' said God, 'are destroyed for lack of knowledge,'—, Be astonished, O ye heavens at this,—the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's trib; but my people do not know, Israel do not consider.'

7. Are there not many, when other defences fail them, and they see that it would be vain to plead, not guilty, who pretend to intreath themselves behind the rampart of divine mercy, and there they think they may rest secure, and sinners as they are, dismiss all fears of future danger. And a noble and sufficient rampart indeed it would prove, if they in earnest resorted to it, and in the proper manner availed themselves of it. But

when the word is only taken up in the mouth, and some speculative notions of mercy in the head, are used as a fence against conviction, and a security in sinning on presumptuously, it will be found a delusive refuge. His name is, 'The Lord God merciful and gracious;' and 'his mercy endureth for ever:' by no other door than that of mercy can any sinner enter into life; but it is mercy as revealed and exercised according to the gospel, not by dispensing with his law, or to the injury of justice, by the impunity of transgressions. Justice has a claim upon criminals prior to mercy. The exercise of the former is necessary; the latter is wholly gratuitous: 'I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy.' As he has vessels of mercy whom he has chosen, so also vessels of wrath, who are meet for destruction. How vain is it to say, because God is good and compassionate, none of his creatures can be made miserable! but when they render themselves guilty, they procure their own misery, and when he inflicts it, he only maintains his rightful authority, and manifests the glory of his justice and truth, while he has no pleasure in the misery of his creatures as such. If the punishment of sinners were inconsistent with the mercy of God, there never could have been either sin or misery in the world, among either the angelic or human race. But it was the same God of mercy that already has cast thousands and myriads of both classes of sinners into hell: and notwithstanding of his mercy, will not many thousands and millions more be subjected to the same doom? and have not those who are enjoying the benefit of his forbearance on earth reason to dread it, while they have not yet obtained mercy, nor been brought as convicts condemned, humbly to implore it, and to accept of it as offered and flowing through the blood of atonement, and the infliction of punishment, upon the 'holy one and the just,' as surety. If the general and absolute mercy of God, were a good reason for dismissing all fear of future wrath in the other world, would it not be as good a reason for dismissing all apprehensions of punishment and calamities in the present life, and even for denying, if it were possible for any, in opposition to universal experience, and in defiance of glaring facts, to do so, the reality of them? What complicated evils, what scenes of misery, are already appearing, and have been continually inflicting upon the guilty inhabitants of the earth, which the tender mercies, that are ever with God, do not prevent. Does he not often, after the manner of men, speak, as if constrained to proceed in opposition to the emotions of his pity and compassion, declaring that his eyes would not spare, and forbidding the agents under him to shew any pity? The fierce anger of the

Lord, that goes forth as a grievous whirlwind, shall not return till he have accomplished the intents of his heart: until he cause his fury to rest upon its destined objects, and in this he will be satisfied. The consideration of their being his creatures, will not stay his avenging hand; 'It is a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them will not have mercy upon them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour'. Is. xxvii. 11. No wonder, when even his infinite love to his own eternal Son did not induce him to spare him, or to suspend the vindictive stroke, when he was made sin for us; 'but it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he then stired up all his wrath; saying, 'awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and I will turn my hand upon the little ones.' 'If these things were done in the green tree what shall be done in the dry?' Is God either cruel or unrighteous that thus taketh vengeance? God forbid; for how then should he judge the world?

In fine, are not even the peculiar doctrines of the gospel itself, sometimes made a pretext for living securely in sin, and indulging presumptuous hopes of escaping wrath? This cannot be denied; particularly, the doctrine of free grace abounding, of justification alone through the merits of Christ, and of redemption alone through his blood, have been so perverted. The grace of God that bringeth salvation, that teacheth them to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, is by some made the means of hardening them in their evil course, and of bringing upon them a greater condemnation. A mere notional belief of these comfortable truths, without understanding their true nature and tendency, and without feeling the practical influence of them, they take to be saving faith, and sufficient security against perishing. If they do not turn that grace into open licentiousness, they lay it as a ground of false peace, and dangerous confidence, and the more refined and specious the deception is, the more difficult it is to deliver them from it. This is a woeful abuse; as if the chief motive for abandoning sin, were an encouragement to continue in it; as if the effectual remedy against it, and the precious blood that was shed to obtain deliverance from it, were reasons for making less account of it, and of the wrath it subjects unto; as if men were to be saved in their sins, instead of being, both by merit and the application of divine power, delivered from them. This 'forgiveness that is with God,' is 'that he may be feared;' and this plenteous redemption is with him, that he may be sought unto. 'Shall we continue in sin,' said Paul, 'that grace may abound?' Of this he speaks with the greatest abhorrence; and declares, that the damnation of such as reason in this manner, is

just. They will be justly condemned for the particular sins they have continued in, and must also answer for this abuse of the glorious gospel, and the dishonour they would cast upon it, and its divine author, as if Christ were 'the minister of sin.'²

But there is yet a third class of persons who may have been truly convinced and deeply humbled, or may still be continuing under that serious concern, and distressing apprehensions that had been excited, perhaps complaining that the arrows of the Almighty stick fast in them, and that they cannot attain to a settled peace of soul, however long and anxiously desired. But such have reason to bless God for giving them an affecting discovery of themselves, and of their real condition, and that they have been made to bethink themselves, while relief may be found, and a remedy for their distress is near. Though no affliction of this kind, more than of any other, 'be for the present joyous but grievous, yet the compassionate heavenly Father can make it yield afterwards the peaceable fruits of righteousness.' It becomes them to acknowledge that their 'own iniquities correct them, and their backslidings reprove them: and that whatever troubles or fearful terror, they have felt, or may now feel, it is unspeakably less than their iniquities deserve, and nothing to what they might have been doomed to suffer for ever with the impenitent. Let them neither 'despise the chastisement of the Lord, nor faint or despond when they are thus rebuked of him.' Those whom he has loved, and to whom he has had thoughts of peace and not of evil, to do them good at the latter end, he has often so dealt with. Entertain good hopes, through grace, that it may be so with you. Though the vision of peace may 'tarry, wait for it;—in the end, it will speak, and not tarry.' Seek unto him who hath torn and can heal, who hath smitten and will bind up. Enquire for God your Maker, 'who giveth songs in the night.' 'In an accepted time,' he saith, 'he will hear, and in the day of salvation, he will succour;—behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.'

Beware, on the one hand, of resting what may be a work of the good Spirit of God, or the first movements of the spiritual life in the soul; and solicitously guard against the above, or other like arts, whereby many seek to suppress convictions, and retain, or regain a dangerous peace; but, on the other hand, seek not to prolong the time of bondage and fear; make not a merit of indulging gloomy apprehensions, and legal terrors: compass not too long the burning mount, fixing your eyes continually upon darkness, tempest, and flames. Do not shun, or obstinately refuse consolation. None can abide in the environs of Sinai ei-

ther with comfort or safety: all who continue under the fiery law, and hear the voice of words uttered from it, must still have cause to tremble, and say as Israel did, ' let not God speak to us in this manner, any more, lest we die.' Remove quickly from such a situation, and hasten your approach to ' mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, the peaceful city of the living God,' where you may hear ' a voice that speaketh better things.' There you must fix your permanent and quiet residence; for ever covered from law-wrath, and safe from fear, though you may still hear the thunders from afar, and see the tempest of vengeance raging around you,—and though you may sometimes feel new alarms, and have reason to be struck with awe, and ever to ' serve God with reverence and godly fear, who is a consuming fire.'

If your concern be, indeed, of the genuine kind, you not only will make inquiry after, but anxiously wait for an answer that may speedily still your fears.—It will dispose you to say ' I will hear what God the Lord will speak,' if, peradventure, he may speak peace. It will prepare you humbly and patiently to listen, like this trembling man, to any information, or tidings about salvation, so much needed, and desired, which his messengers may have in charge to impart to you.

Miscellaneous.

ASSOCIATE REFORMED SYNOD OF THE WEST.

We learn from the Religious Examiner for November, that this Synod held their annual meeting at Chillicothe, Ohio, in October last. The Examiner contains extensive extracts from their minutes. The Rev. Robert Reid was elected moderator. The most important business before them of a general nature, were the subjects of slavery, and the proposed re-organization of the General Associate Reformed Synod.* We shall give a few extracts from their minutes, tending to show the nature of their proceedings, and the final result on these important topics.

On the subject of Slavery.—It appears that an overture, with a resolution appended, was made by the Synod of 1827, for the consideration of their Presbyteries. What the language of that resolution is, we are unable to ascertain, any further than it is exhibited in the reasonings of the presbyteries, as the minutes do not contain it, neither have we a copy of it before us. But the substance of it, if faithfully acted upon, it appears would exclude slave holders from their communion.

* See our fourth volume, page 331.

The different views expressed in the different presbyterial reports, furnish conclusive evidence, if evidence were needed, that slavery is an evil of the most alarming kind, threatening spiritual barrenness to the church, and both moral and physical desolation to the body politic: an evil which compelled even unbelieving philosophy to exclaim—"When I reflect that God is just, I tremble for my country":* an evil which baffles human wisdom to conceive, and mocks human ability to execute, a plan adequate to its removal. Even those who are involved in it, and who mourn over it, are utterly unable, in many cases, to rid themselves of its withering effects. There is no view which our mind can take of the subject, that does not irresistibly lead to the conclusion—that this system of traffic in human beings, carried on by a people who have solemnly proclaimed to the world that all men are born free and equal, must grow with our growth, until the land shall become unable to contain the oppressor and the oppressed, and shall be compelled to drink the blood of the one or the other, or perhaps of both: Unless God, in his infinite and unmerited goodness, shall be pleased to open a way of deliverance, as signal and miraculous as were his mighty acts of old, when he glorified his name in the presence of the heathen; and delivered his church, "by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm."² We are aware that many are looking, with anxious solicitude, for relief, to the American Colonization Society. And far be it from us to esteem lightly its philanthropic exertions, or to say aught that might tend to retard its progress: but its means must long, if not for ever, remain wholly inadequate; for in the light of human calculation, the negroes being willing, it would require, in order to produce any thing effective, to remunerate holders of slaves, and to defray the expense of transportation, an annual sum equal to the revenue of the United States. In the meantime the evil grows faster than the ability to remove it. Nevertheless, it is the duty of Christians to pray for the success of this society, and contribute to its funds according to their ability, knowing that God often works by means wholly disproportionate to the end, and no better method having been yet devised.

In thus freely declaring our views, we presume not to question either the piety or the motives of our Christian brethren, who may entertain different views. We have seen enough of its difficulties to admonish us on this point; and we have the most unquestionable evidence, that many are involved in this evil, whose whole demeanor is an ornament to their Christian profession. This, however, proves nothing in favour of the system.—

* Jefferson.

God, in his sovereignty, frequently surrounds his chosen people, with many external evils, of which, human wisdom would say, they must necessarily be partakers; and perhaps to a certain extent this may be true of them as individuals; but who will venture to affirm that the courts of God's house may judicially sanction such evils. If they may not, we are replied to, they excommunicate an unoffending brother. To this we rejoin, that God, by this procedure, may be saying to them as he did to Abraham of old, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house." God has often made this a condition with his people of enjoying the ordinances. And who will say, that this was done to deliver them from less external evils than those of slavery? We are, therefore, of opinion that the only safe course left for the church of God, is to condemn involuntary slavery entirely. We advance this opinion with humility and diffidence, knowing that many whose judgment and Christian attainments we are compelled to respect are of a different opinion.

In confirmation of our own views, the first Presbytery of Ohio say, among other things—

"1. Among the duties which we say are required by the eighth commandment, is, 'the restitution of goods unlawfully detained from the right owners thereof.' Larg. Cat. Q. 141.

2. Another acknowledged duty is, 'an endeavour by all just and lawful means, to procure, preserve, and further the *wealth* and outward estate of *others*, as well as our own.' Now let us seriously ask how a slaveholder can discharge this duty towards his slave?

3. In the catalogue of sins which we say the eighth command prohibits, is 'manstealing and receiving any thing that is stolen.' The overture, in the argumentative part, notices this; but it may be well enough to notice it again, as it is a part of our standards. They suppose manstealing generally lies at the foundation of the practice of slavery, and a prohibition of this, amounts to a prohibition of all similar means—of *all deceptive and forcible means*, of robbing men of their liberty. Now is it not by deception or by force, or by both, that slave holders retain their slaves? It has been suggested that the term rendered 'manstealers' denotes 'slave traders.' In a confirmation of this idea, we would respectfully submit the following considerations. When our Lord Jesus and his apostles, intended to convey the simple idea of stealing, they use the Greek verb *clepto*. So when our Lord replied to the ruler, who asked 'what he should do to inherit eternal life?' he said; 'thou knowest the commandments, do not commit adultery; do not kill; do not steal;' it is *me clepeis*, see

Luke xviii. 20. So Paul in his epistle to the Ephesians, iv. 28. uses the same verb, and its participle in the same sense. 'Let him that stole, steal no more;' as *clepton* or *cleptis*, is one who steals, or is a thief; so *andra-clepton* or *andra-cleptis* would be a *man-thief*, or one who steals a man; but the term the apostle uses, is *andrapodistes*, a derivative from *andrapodizo*, answering to *mancipa* in Latin. Now this term signifies to make over a title to another, to sell, to alienate. Whence we conclude that *andrapodistes* is one who sells his fellow-man, or claiming him as property alienates him to another. *Podistes* is the agent who puts his fellow-man under his feet, as slaveholders do.—Our standards forbid not only manstealing, but the receiving of such stolen property, either by gift or by purchase.

4. The seventh commandment, we say, requires 'marriage (by those that have not the gift of continency) conjugal love, and cohabitation.' Larger Cat. Q. 138. Continency is not characteristic of slaves. Now how can a slaveholder reconcile his practice of detaining a husband or wife from one another, while they should live together, and would love to have it so? Is he not bound to endeavour that they may live together?

5. According to our directory in the administration of baptism to infants, the administrator is to require the parents of the child to engage to worship the Lord regularly, morning and evening, agreeably to the directory for family worship.

The principle seems here to be assumed, that every one presenting a child for baptism is, with respect to men, lord of his time; from which it would follow, that a slave could not receive baptism for his child in the Associate Reformed church.

Resolved, That the Presbytery recommend to the Synod to adopt the resolution with which the overture closes."

But, on the other side of the question, the Presbytery of Monongahela, say—"That slavery was tolerated within the jurisdiction of the Presbyteries and Synods, which existed in the days of the apostles, does not require proof. That slavery can be no longer tolerated, is language never held by the apostles. They admitted, and retained in the enjoyment of christian privileges, slaveholders, without demurring."

If this statement can be established as true, and that the apostles sanctioned the kind of slavery now practised in the United States, there is of course an end to the controversy. But this we think cannot be done, without fixing the charge of inconsistency upon the apostles; because involuntary slavery is so obviously inconsistent with the whole tenor of divine revelation.—We apprehend, therefore, that the slavery tolerated by the ap-

ties was *voluntary*. Though we admit, that the most absolute slavery did exist, in the days of the apostles, and that they exhorted slaves to render obedience to their masters, it does not prove that they tolerated it, because it is the duty of slaves to be in subjection to their masters, if they cannot liberate themselves without endangering their own or the personal safety of their masters.

The report of the Presbytery of Big-Spring, is an elaborate and well written paper; from which we have only room for the following extracts:

"There can be no law in Christ's statute book which will bar any man the privileges of his house and church on the supposition he will discharge his duty. It is every man's duty, made such by the book of revelation, to embrace the doctrines of the gospel and live accordingly. It is the duty of all slaveholders to be Christians, yet if they were all known and acknowledged to be such, because circumstances prohibited them from doing what they much desire to do (namely, free their slaves) yet on account of these circumstances of natural necessity which they cannot control, they would by the adoption of the prepared resolution be barred the communion of the church; which would be therefore contrary to the laws of Christ.

"Certainly it is neither the principle, nor the necessary practice of slavery, that its subjects should be prevented devotional exercises and religious instruction, nor that husband and wife should be separated. We have said these things not to justify the practice, or principle of slavery, (for absolutely it cannot be justified, either by the laws of God, or rights of man,) but to vindicate good men from exaggerated crimes imputed to them, and if possible to set this matter where it ought to rest.

"We have no wish to offer any reply to that part of the overture which argues slavery to be without foundation in either the Old or New Testament, and contrary to the spirit of both: with this we agree. It is demanded, what then will we do? We answer, use forbearance. We plead for this not because it is a little sin; not because we lose no essential truth thereby; not because some measure of corruption may be knowingly allowed in the church by the guardians; nor on the cry that charity should cover such sins; but simply on the ground, that the evil does not admit a present and complete remedy: the very ground on which it was exercised by Christ and his apostles. So it appears from the manner in which this business was treated by them. Our blessed Saviour came 'to preach deliverance to the captives, to set at liberty them that are bruised,' which promises, though prin-

cipally expressive of spiritual blessings, were one day to have a literal fulfilment; as he did not interfere for the emancipation of slaves, literally while on earth, it was in process of time to be done by the energies of the gospel; this is now in part accomplished, as proven by the fact that where Christianity prevails, and the doctrines and ordinances of the gospel exercise the most commanding influence, on the hearts of men, that they have the clearest perceptions of their enalienable rights, personal and political, civil and religious, and allow them to be enjoyed by others. * * * God forbid that we should, and we admonish our brethren not to depart so widely from the spirit and conduct of our master, as to wage war with political laws and civil institutions, by asserting that they must immediately be free whom the civil law has bound; not to teach rebellion against civil rulers, where he taught subjection to the powers that be; as if our free republic were less an ordinance of God than despotic monarchies; not to endanger the credit of religion by inducing servants to think, that as they are robbed of many dear rights by being enslaved, so they owe no fidelity to their masters, may be idle in their service, purloin their property, elope when they can,—and do worse when in their power; not to render their service, (already too hard) still intolerable by provoking their masters to lay on them still heavier burdens, and lashes, without delivering them at all. We exhort you to seek the peace of the country in which we live, as in it we have peace; to seek the weal, both temporal and spiritual, of slaves; teaching them that though the slaves of men, they may be the freed-men of Christ," &c.

The report concludes with an exhortation "to seek the comfort of believing masters, not troubling them farther than is necessary about this matter, not making sad the hearts of those whom God hath not made sad, by casting them out of the church, which Christ and his apostles would not have done. The master, on account of the unproductiveness of slave labour, the expense of keeping, and the cares and anxieties arising from other causes connected with them, is more a slave than his domestic."

The above extracts furnish the most plausible arguments we have seen on that side of the question. But we consider the argument of the Presbytery of Big-Spring to turn on this single point, viz. that *slavery is an evil which admits of no complete remedy*. Admit that, as it now exists, there can be no remedy, we ask, does the law of God cease to command because man by transgression has lost the power to obey? All sound divines have answered this question in the negative. And why is slavery exempt from this principle, which shines so conspicuously on the

pages of divine revelation? and which is the grand reason why there could be no remission of sins without the shedding of blood. Now it appears to us, and is generally conceded, that involuntary slavery, under any modification which does not virtually abolish it, is a transgression of the law, as a rule of duty in the hands of the Mediator; therefore, we conclude, that no ecclesiastical court can sanction slavery without a violation of their covenant of duty. For it should be remembered that the "natural necessity which slaveholders cannot controul," is the consequence of transgression, and not the result of obedience. But though slavery admits not of a *complete* remedy, it is not a case utterly hopeless, especially so far as the church of God is immediately concerned. In this respect, there may be a remedy. Not by emancipation, without providing for them, nor "by asserting that they must immediately be free whom the civil law has bound," nor "by inducing slaves to think that they may be idle in their master's service, purloin his property, elope when they can, and do worse when in their power," but by requiring the slaveholder applying for admission to the communion of the church to report to the session the number of his slaves, what sum of money it would be necessary for him to receive for his slaves in order that he might not embarrass himself, nor distress his family, by emancipating them. Let it be the duty of the session to ascertain the facts in the case, and report them to the Colonization Society, and also to the higher judicatories of the church. We have every reason to hope for the blessing of God, upon an effort like this. Enable the Colonization Society to publish to the world that there are individual slaveholders solicitous to obtain deliverance from the evils of slavery, and are praying for its assistance, and it would give a new impetus to its operations, and additions to its funds would pour in from every section of the United States, in a manner that would enable them to purchase the slaves of all such applicants, and transport them to Liberia, where they may become freemen, and take an honourable stand among the civilized nations of the earth. It would be expected that the slaveholder should take as small a sum as his circumstances will admit. This of course would require some sacrifice on his part. But truth and duty must not be sacrificed.—Some expedient must be adopted to keep the guilt of slavery out of the church, and if others will devise a better one than is here proposed, we will give it a cordial support. If it should be said that the person thus disposing of his slaves cannot support his family in a slaveholding state, then we say, as has been already hinted, let him remove to some other section of country.

The following proceedings show the final disposition of the subject.

"Took up the subject of slavery.

Moved by Messrs. Sharpe and Buchanan:

Whereas, a majority of the presbyteries composing this Synod, have reported against the adoption of the resolution, with which the Overture on slavery closes—therefore

Resolved, That Synod dismiss the further consideration of that subject at this meeting. Negatived; Ayes 11, Noes 13, neutral 2.

Whereas, in all important cases, unanimity of decision should as far as possible be sought—and, whereas from a diversity of views, prevailing among the members, it appears, that no decision on the subject of slavery, now before us, will, at this time, be harmonious—and whereas, some of the brethren have expressed a desire to have more time to examine the subject, before they are called on to decide—Therefore

Resolved, That the farther consideration of the subject of slavery be postponed, till the next meeting of Synod—and that all the reports of the presbyteries on that subject, together with the unofficial communication from the presbytery of Big-Spring, be published with the minutes of the present meeting as subjects of full and free discussion. Approved."

Of the re-organization of the General Associate Reformed Synod.—On this subject we quote the correspondence entire.

Letter from the Associate Reformed Synod of the South.

To the Moderator of the Associate Reformed Synod of the West.

Rev. Sir; I am directed by the Associate reformed Synod of the South, to inform you that, at our last meeting, the proceedings of the Convention held at Pittsburgh 12th September, 1827 were taken under consideration, when the whole were approved. I have only to add my ardent wish, that, should it be the will of Zion's King, there may be among the different Synods a concurrent judgment, in relation to this interesting subject. By order of Synod.

JOHN T. PRESSLY.

Whitehall, Abbeville District S. C. 22d July, 1828.

Chillicothe, October 24th, 1828.

To the moderator of the Associate Reformed Synod of the south, and the remaining members, to meet at _____ Nov. 7th, 1828.

Dear Brethren,

Your expectations, on the subject of the re-organization of the General Synod, have been raised, no doubt in a considerable measure, by our instrumentality. We are not, for the present, able to write in conformity with what we suppose are your expectations. By your letter, it appears, your body has concurred in the terms of Union proposed in, and agreed to by, the Convention of the delegates held in Pittsburgh a year ago. Our Synod has not yet seen its way clear for such a concurrence. It is to be feared that a concurrence, at present, would only be a mean of exciting discord among ourselves. You are apprised that the subject of slavery has been before this Court, and an Overture on that subject laid before our Churches. We regard it as a subject of weighty concern, upon which God, in his holy providence, is calling us to give some decision. Impressed with its importance, and desirous of maintaining our own peace in accordance with duty, and

hoping to be prepared for a harmonious decision sometime hereafter, the subject is laid over for consideration at our next stated meeting. You can easily see that our decision on this subject ought to take place before the re-organization, lest a future discussion might speedily rend a wound but recently healed.

In relation to the Synod in the North, we believe it would be highly inexpedient, under existing circumstances, to form an organic union with them. In several periodical prints it has been stated, that one leading member of that body, even since the Convention, has not abandoned what we count latitudinarianism, in respect to Communion and Psalmody, that he communed with a very mixed body of ministers; and further, that others, of that body, when out of their own congregations use human compositions in the praise of God, you may clearly see that it is not any principle of selfishness or obstinacy that has led us to defer a concurrence in the proposed reorganization of General Synod.

We also inform you that our Synod is somewhat unanimous, in preferring the ratio of delegation prescribed in our Constitution; yet as the rule, in that case, is only prudential, if all other difficulties can be removed we might agree to a modification of that rule.

Brethren, we have already recognized you as a sister church; our love to you, as the people of God, has not changed; but a regard to duty, and the peace of Zion, forbids haste in forming organic Union. We hope you will justify us in the course we are pursuing, when together with this letter you shall have seen the extracts of our minutes. Brethren, it is our wish to keep up the correspondence between our bodies, and wishing you the blessing of the Churches' head, we subscribe ourselves your brethren in the Lord.

By order of the Synod.

The committee to prepare the draft of a letter to the Associate Reformed Synod of the North reported said draft, which report, on motion was approved and adopted.

Chillicothe, Ohio, October 24, 1823.

To the Moderator and other members of the Associate Reformed Synod of the North.

DEAR BRETHREN—

It is not without considerable reluctance and embarrassment that we address you at this time, particularly on the subject of the re-organization of the General Synod. On this important and interesting measure, it was expected that we would have been able to come to a harmonious and satisfactory decision, at our present meeting; and we suppose that our brethren of the other Associate Reformed Synods have probably entertained the same expectation. It is therefore by no means pleasing to us, to have to apprise the Synods of the North and South, that we have been met by difficulties on this subject, and difficulties which we have judged of sufficient magnitude to cause us to postpone for the present a final decision on the question. The accomplishment of a union of our three Synods, on principles that would be calculated to promote the comfort and edification of all concerned, would have realized the sanguine hope, and unfeigned desire of at least a very large proportion of the members of this court. Our feelings of personal regard for many of those who belong to each of our sister Synods, with whom several of us are more particularly acquainted; and of christian affection for them all; and our conviction that the interests of our Church could be more efficiently and extensively promoted, by us, in a united, than in a divided state; all lead us to wish for the union in question, provided we can come together without bringing with us the materials of future discord, and unhappiness. But unless there be a sufficient degree of unanimity in sentiment, and of conformity in practice, previous to our uniting, to insure peace afterwards, and to afford a promise that we might walk together in harmony and comfort, you will, we are persuaded, agree with us in thinking, that but little, either of profit or of pleasure, could be anticipated, from the adoption of the plan. Now unless our information be wrong, there is perhaps some reason to fear, that there is not that perfect accordance of views on certain points, between

your Synod and this one, which would furnish a rational prospect that we might not find ourselves involved in contention and strife, almost as soon as the connexion should be formed. The points to which we refer, you will probably understand, even before we mention them, to be those of communion and Psalmody. We have learned through channels of information, which we cannot but consider as entitled to some confidence, that even since the meeting of our delegates in convention at Pittsburgh last fall, one at least of the members of your Synod, did engage in the practice of intercommunion, and in the use of other songs of praise than those of inspiration. The pages of the Religious Monitor, of the Christian Advocate, the Missionary Herald, and perhaps other religious periodical publications, as also verbal declarations made by individuals from your section of country to some of our members are the sources from whence our knowledge on the subject just mentioned has been derived. And some of these authorities have spoken of the above practices as not only indulged in by the individuals referred to, but as things by no means uncommon in your branch of our Church. For some time after the convention of delegates met in Pittsburgh last fall and their minutes were published we did confidently expect, that whatever might have been their previous course of conduct, all your members, who were favorable to a reorganization of the Gen. Synod, on the basis we conceive to have been adopted by that Assembly, would have abstained in the meantime from the practices we have hinted at. We were therefore both surprised and grieved, on hearing what we have already detailed. Some of our members have been from certain circumstances led to expect that a decision of these subjects would probably soon be made by your Synod; and that intelligence of your having done so, might perhaps reach us at or before our present meeting. This hope, however, has not yet been realized. Consistently, therefore, with those views for which, previously to our separation from the late Gen. Synod, we contended so long and so earnestly, and for the sake of which views that separation finally took place; to which views the attachment of our ministers and people is, to say the least of it, quite as universal and quite as strong as ever it was; we conceived that we could not, under existing circumstances, give our votes for carrying into immediate effect the plan of union that has been proposed. It would have been, we think, entirely futile, and we trust you will concur with us, in thinking that it would have been so, to have gone on to consummate the union in question, without some security, that the practices in which we have already so decidedly refused to concur would be wholly abstained from, by those with whom we were to unite. For us to do so, would be only to involve ourselves again, in all likelihood, and others with us, in contests both troublesome and irksome, from which we have but very recently escaped; and to incur the certain and almost entire forfeiture of the confidence of our congregations and people throughout our whole bounds. In accordance therefore with that spirit of plain dealing and candor which is probably in all cases and in all respects best, we now distinctly state, and wish it distinctly understood, that the only principle on which we can see that a reorganization of the Gen. Synod could be at all desirable, either to ourselves or to any of the parties concerned, is an entire abandonment of these practices, to which we must have been long known to be so utterly opposed. For the sake of satisfaction, on this point, we have concluded to delay the proposed union a little longer, and this satisfaction, as soon as our brethren are prepared to give, we respectfully ask.

We would mention also, as having presented some difficulty in the way, of acceding to the union, certain particulars in the plan proposed by the last convention of Delegates for its accomplishment. The members of our Con. seem pretty generally to consider the ratio of representation there laid down as unequal and unfair, and are disposed to adhere to the doctrine of our constitution on that subject. The principle also recommended by the convention, that the decision of a majority of Presbyteries, where a matter has been sent down to them from Gen. Synod for their judgment thereon, should be considered as definitive, appears not to receive in its present unqualified form, the approbation of many of our members. The constitution of our church pre-

cisely as it now stands, would probably be more satisfactory on this point than any other alteration that could easily be made. The two last mentioned matters, however, were the other more important considerations that have been glanced at, disposed of, would not, we think, be likely to oppose an insuperable barrier to the accomplishment of our wishes.

We have only to mention, in addition, as a matter presenting some difficulty before us in this case, the situation of the Synod of the South in relation to Slavery. The question of making that evil a term of communion has been for some time before us, and is not yet decided. We have thought it will be better, that this subject also should be disposed of, before we decide finally on the subject of reorganizing the Gen. Synod. For these reasons, we have concluded to lay over the subject till the next meeting of our Synod, which is to be held at Steubenville on the 2d Tuesday of October, 1829. And that for the time of the first meeting of Gen. Synod, should it be previously reorganized, the first Monday of May, 1830, be recommended. We trust that our brethren will admit the justness and sufficiency of the reasons from which we have acted. The accomplishment of a union, on grounds that would promise peace and comfort, we have already said and now repeat, would be highly gratifying to this Synod. Wishing you the presence and blessing of the head of the Church, we are, dear brethren, affectionately yours, &c.

By order of the Ass. Ref. Synod of the West.

JOHN STEELE.

It is with pleasure we witness this decided disapprobation of the vacillating course pursued by the Associate Reformed Synod of the North, on the subjects of psalmody and communion; and we sincerely hope that its influence may be beneficial to the cause of God; for the cause of a scriptural psalmody is the cause of God. And how lamentable to the friends of a Reformation cause, must it be, should our Associate Reformed brethren continue in a begun course of defection, here officially and publicly charged upon the Associate Reformed Synod of the North, until they are found among those who have joined with the infidel in repudiating that sublime and heavenly portion of God's word—*The Psalms*—and declaring them unfit to be sung in a Christian assembly! Should such finally prove to be the result, it may be said to them by the friends and advocates of a scripture psalmody, as Caesar said in his fall to a supposed friend, *Et tu, Brute!* Though we do not apprehend equally fatal consequences to the cause of psalmody; for should all its present lovers and friends turn their backs upon it, God would raise up others to take their places.—But we hope better things. We look for an end to the mists which now cover the visible church, concealing so many precious truths, and so greatly marring the beauty, and obscuring the glory of “the bride, the Lamb's wife;” for we have the infallible assurance of her Lord and husband, that “when the enemy cometh in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.”

We infer, from the general spirit of the above letter, that the Associate Reformed Synod of the West does not tolerate, in *her* ministers, a departure from a scripture psalmody. But if this in-

ference be incorrect, we suppose the editor of the *Examiner* can set us right. See our number for October, page 237.

The editor of the *Examiner* informs us, that the late meeting of the Associate Reformed Synod of the West, was one of the most cheering he ever attended. "The unhallowed passions were kept under or soon subdued." But the sober dignity and unrivalled beauty of the following sentences, cannot be duly appreciated, without being quoted entire.

The spirit of unanimity in the faith, and uniformity in the practice of Christianity, together with a respectable, and in some cases, an unexampled increase of members, in the Associate Reformed Synod of the West, have been clearly evinced, by presbyterian reports, and corresponding statements. We are not fond of proclaiming our revivals on the house tops; yet certainly an accession of 150 communicants to a single congregation, during the past year, deserves to be registered to the praise of Redeeming Grace. *Our Associate brethren, with others who envy the prosperity of the righteous,* may affect to sneer at these tokens of the divine favour, but they are nevertheless, to us, the joy and rejoicing of our hearts.

Where envy and rancor reigns in the bosom of the spectator, it is easy to magnify the neglect of *duty in one or two cases out of an hundred*, into an occasion of charging with general neglect. Brethren, it is no matter to us, that such charges furnish no evidence of rectitude of heart or a spotless life, in those who make them. It is incumbent upon us that "with well doing we put to silence the ignorance of foolish men." We may indeed reply to our reproachers, and say, "judge not that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye; but considerest not the beam that is thine own eye.—Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pluck the mote out of thy brother's eye." At the same time let us pray God to refine us as silver is refined and purify us as gold is purified; that, as perfect and entire wanting nothing, we may be the more meet for the master's use.

THE TEN LOST JEWISH TRIBES.

The following paragraph, which lately appeared in a German paper, under the head of Leipsic, is calculated to lead to some interesting inquiries:—

"Afterward having seen, some years past, merchants from Tiflis, Persia, and Armenia, among the visitors at our fair, we have had, for the first time, *two traders from Bucharia, with shawls, which are there manufactured of the finest wool of the goats of Thibet and Cashmere, by the Jewish families, who form a third part of the population.* In Bucharia, (formerly the capital of Sogdiana,) the Jews have been very numerous ever since the Babylonian captivity, and are there as remarkable for their industry and manufactures, as they are in England for their money transactions. It was not till last year that the Russian Government succeeded in extending its diplomatic mission far into Bucharia. The above traders exchanged their shawls for coarse and fine woolen cloths of such colors as are most esteemed in the East."

Much interest has been excited by the information which this paragraph

conveys, and which is equally novel and important. In none of the geographical works which we have consulted, do we find the least hint as to the existence in Bucharia of such a body of Jews as that here mentioned, amounting to one third of the whole population; but as the fact can no longer be doubted, the next point of inquiry which presents itself is, whence have they proceeded and how have they come to establish themselves in a region so remote from their original country? This question, we think, can only be answered by supposing that these persons are the descendants of the long lost Ten Tribes, concerning the fate of which, theologians, historians, and antiquarians, have been alike puzzled; and, however wild this hypothesis may at first appear, there are not wanting circumstances to render it far from being improbable. In the 17th chapter of the Second Book of Kings, it is said, "In the ninth year of Hosea, the King of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Helah and Habor, by the river of Gozan, and in the city of the Medes," and in the subsequent verses, as well as in the writings of the Prophets, it is said, that the Lord then "put away Israel out of his sight, and carried them away into the land of Assyria unto this day." In the Apocrypha, 2d Esdras, xiii., it is said, that the Ten Tribes were carried beyond the river, (Euphrates,) and so they were brought into another land, when they took counsel together, that they would leave the multitude of the heathen, and go forth into a further country, where never mankind dwelt; that they entered in at the narrow passage of the river Euphrates, when the springs of the flood were stayed, and "went through the country a great journey, even in a year and a half;" and it is added, that "there will they remain, until the latter time, when they will come forth again." The country beyond Bucharia was unknown to the ancients; and it is, we believe, generally admitted, that the river Gozan, mentioned in the Book of Kings, is the same as the Ganges, which has its rise in those very countries in which the Jews reside, of whom the Leipsic account speaks. The distance which these two merchants must have travelled, cannot, therefore, be less than three thousand miles; and there can be little doubt that the Jews, whom they represent as a third part of the population of the country, are descendants of the Ten Tribes of Israel, settled by the river Gozan.

The great plain of central Asia, forming four principal sides, viz. Little Bucharia, Thibet, Mongolia, and Mantchous, contains a surface of 150,000 square miles, and a population of 20,000,000. This vast country is still very little known. The great traits of its gigantic formation, compose, for the most part, all that we are certain of. It is an immense plain of an excessive elevation, intersected with barren rocks, and vast deserts of black, and almost moving sand. It is supported on all sides by mountains of granite, whose elevated summits determine the different climates of the great continent of Asia, and form the division of its waters. From its exterior flow all the great rivers of that part of the world. In the interior are a quantity of rivers, having little declivity, or no issue, which are lost in the sands, or perhaps feed stagnant waters. In the southern chains are countries populous, rich, and civilised; Little Bucharia, Great and Little Thibet. The people of the north are shepherds and wanderers. Their riches consist in their herds. Their habitations are tents and towns and camps, which are transported according to the wants of pasture. The Bucharians enjoy the right of trading to all parts of Asia, and the Thibetians cultivate the earth to advantage. The ancients had only a confused idea of Central Asia. "The inhabitants of the country," as we learn from a great authority, "are in a high state of civilization; possessing all the useful manufactures, and lofty houses built with stone. The Chinese reckon (but this is evidently an exaggeration) that Thibet alone contains 33,000,000 of persons. The merchants of Cashmere, on their way to Yarkland, in little Bucharia, pass through Little Thibet. This country is scarcely known to European geographers." The immense plain of Central Asia is hemmed in, and almost inaccessible by mountain ranges of the greatest elevation, which surround it on all sides, except China; and when the watchful jealousy of the Government of the Celestial Empire is considered, it will scarcely be wondered at that the vast region in question is so little known.

Such is the country which these newly-discovered Jews are said to inhabit in such numbers. The following facts may perhaps serve to throw some additional light on this interesting subject.

In the year 1822, a Mr. Sargon, who if we mistake not, was one of the agents of the London Society, communicated to England some interesting accounts of a number of persons resident at Bombay, Cannamore, and their vicinity, who are evidently the descendants of Jews, calling themselves Beni Israel, and bearing almost uniformly Jewish names, but with Persian terminations. This gentleman feeling very desirous of obtaining all possible knowledge of their condition, undertook a mission for this purpose to Cannamore; and the result of his inquiries was, a conviction that they were not Jews of the one tribe and a half, being of a different race to the white and black Jews at Cochin, and consequently that they were a remnant of the long lost Ten Tribes. This gentleman also concluded, from the information obtained respecting the Beni Israel, that they existed in great numbers in the countries between Cochin and Bombay, the *north of Persia*, among the hordes of *Tartary*, and in *Cashmere*; the very countries in which, according to the paragraph in the German paper, they exist in such numbers. So far, then, these accounts confirm each other, and there is every probability that the Beni-Israel, resident on the west of the Indian peninsula, had originally proceeded from Bucharria. It will, therefore, be interesting to know something of their moral and religious character. The following particulars are collected from Mr. Sargon's accounts.—1. In dress and manners they resemble the natives, so as not to be distinguished from them except by attentive observation and inquiry. 2. They have Hebrew names of the same kind, and with the same local termination as the Sepoys in the 9th regiment Bombay Native Infantry. 3. Some of them read Hebrew, and they have a faint tradition of the cause of their original exodus from Egypt. 4. Their common language is the Hindoo. 5. They keep idols and worship them, and use idolatrous ceremonies intermixed with Hebrew. 6. They circumcise their own children. 7. They observe the Kippor, or great expiation day of the Hebrews, but not the Sabbath, or any of the feasts or fast days. 8. They call themselves *Gorah Jehudi*, or white Jews; and they term the black Jews *Collah Jehudi*. 9. They speak of the Arabian Jews as their brethren, but do not acknowledge the European Jews as such because they are of a fairer complexion than themselves. They use, on all occasions, and under the most trivial circumstances, the usual Jewish prayer—"Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." 10. They have no cohen, (priest) levite, or kasi, among them, under those terms; but they have a kasi, (reader) who performs prayers, and conducts their religious ceremonies; and they appear to have elders and a chief in each community, who determine in their religious concerns. 11. They expect the Messiah, and that they will one day return to Jerusalem. They think that the time of his appearance will soon arrive at which they much rejoice, believing at Jerusalem that they will see their God, worship him only, and be despised no more.

These particulars, we should presume, can scarcely fail to prove interesting, both in a moral and religious, as well as in a geographical point of view. The number of the scattered members of the tribe of Judah and the half-tribe of Benjamin, rather exceed than fall short of five millions. Now, if to this number be added the many other millions to be found in the different countries of the East, what an immense power would be brought into action were the spirit of nationality once roused, or any extraordinary event to occur, which should induce them to unite in claiming possession of that land which was given to them for an "heritage forever," and to which, in every other clime of the earth, their fondest hopes and their dearest aspirations never cease to turn.

Caledonian Mercury.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A much esteemed correspondent has suggested, among other things, for the improvement of our work, that we should assign

the several subjects, with which we design to occupy our pages, to such persons as are judged best qualified to write on them, with a special request that an essay on the subject assigned be furnished by a given time; but that we still reserve the right to examine, reject, &c. He thinks persons will generally write better on a subject assigned them, than when they are left to their own choice. This may be the case; but it would place us in a very delicate situation; so that we could scarcely fail of giving offence by rejecting an article furnished at our special request. Yet we cordially agree with the general plan suggested for improvement, could it be carried into effect; but there is in general, we think, a degree of diffidence or backwardness, among our ministers, about writing for the Monitor, not because they are incompetent to the task, nor because they are unfriendly to its success and respectability, for many of them have given practical demonstration that they are deeply interested in its success; but by aiming at too much, when they ~~contemplate~~ writing, they become averse to the drudgery, and seem disposed to leave the task to others. But we do not conceive it necessary that a man writing for a periodical should always lay himself out as though he designed to produce a complete body of divinity.—There are many incidents in ministerial labours, which furnish abundance of matter for brief essays; and brevity should be studied when the subject will admit of it. These *little occurrences* which are constantly passing before the observation of a minister, may be turned to good account—may serve to illustrate some important point of truth or duty—perhaps in a more striking manner than could be done in a laboured essay. The different attainments, characters and dispositions, with which he has to deal, often furnish matter, for much useful reflection, which would repay the trouble of committing to paper, even where there is no design of publication. Our correspondent has suggested that Reviews of both new and old publications,—the validity of ordination in the Protestant Church—Slavery—Fragments of Ecclesiastical History—Scraps of Biblical Criticism, Ordination and Synodical Sermons, and Sermons on particular occasions, would furnish useful subjects for admission into our pages. To the above catalogue, it has been suggested, from another source, that *Cases of Conscience* would give additional interest to the Monitor. These might be forwarded in the shape of queries by any person in doubt, respecting a particular subject. On all these, and a variety of other important topics, respecting faith and practice, we will thankfully receive communications. And in the mean time, we solicit attention to the following queries.

1. How are we to understand the expression, "Willful Desertion," as used in the Confession of Faith, Chap. xxiv. Sect. 6.? Is it confined to desertion under circumstances that furnish good ground for suspicion that adultery is connected with it, such as elopement? or does it extend to desertion, where no such suspicion attaches? If it does extend to the latter, is the party deserted, entitled to marry again? Or is he or she, as the case may be, only entitled to be liberated from the party offending?

2. What steps is it the duty of church courts to take with such persons as take offence, and desert their profession, and join the communion of a church which they had in their former profession, condemned as corrupt, or with such as neglect and abandon the ordinances, and give a stated attendance on the preaching of the word in a corrupt church, though they do not join in the communion of such church?

THE TARIFF.

We have for some months past observed an unusual commotion in some of the southern states, particularly South Carolina, Virginia, and Georgia, respecting the tariff. But we have been so long accustomed to the *blustering* of politicians, in every part of the United States, that we have considered this commotion as a temporary kind of excitement, raised by a few heated imaginations, which would soon subside, and give place to reason and argument; and, if unequal burdens had been imposed upon any of our political brethren, that there was still sufficient justice and magnanimity left to redress the evil. Consequently we have not viewed the heated newspaper paragraphs, nor the impassioned language of "grave senators," on this subject, in a very serious light. Mr. Madison, ex-president of the United States, has published two letters, on the "constitutionality of the power in congress to impose a tariff for the encouragement of manufactures." In these letters it is maintained that congress has the power of encouraging manufactures, by a variety of reasons, some of which appear to be striking and conclusive to the most superficial reader. From the age of Mr. Madison, and the high stations which he has filled, we should suppose those politicians who have ever professed to admire his abilities as a statesman, would pay sufficient deference to his opinions, to refrain from violent proceedings, especially till they had exhausted every other mode of redress. But this state of feeling seems to have arisen almost to a fixed opposition to a law of the U. States; or it has at least more the appearance of this, than any other circumstance which has transpired since the adoption

of the Federal Constitution. Without taking sides on the tariff, or any other political question, which may agitate the public mind, it is with grief we insert the following resolutions introduced into the senate of South Carolina, by Mr. Wilson.

1st. That the late tariff act of the United States, laid for the protection of domestic manufactures, is *unconstitutional, void and incapable; and not binding upon the citizens of this state, and they are discharged from all obedience to the same.*

2d. That the governor of this state be instructed and required to protect the citizens of this state from the unconstitutional control or oppression of all such laws as may be attempted to be enforced against them from any *and every foreign authority.*

3d. That the foregoing resolutions be forwarded by the governor, to the president of the U. States, our senators and members of congress, and to the collectors of the towns of *Charleston, Georgetown and Beaufort.*

From a more recent account, we learn that the above resolutions did not pass, but were superceded by the following proceedings, the direct tendency of which, is **CIVIL WAR!**

Dec 16. The senate resolved itself into a committee of the whole, Mr. Evans in the chair, on the late governor's message.

After considerable discussion, the committee rose, Mr. President resumed the chair—and Mr. Evans, from the committee of the whole, reported the following resolution for the adoption of the senate:

"Resolved, That the tariff is unconstitutional, and should be resisted; and the other states be invited to co-operate with us in the measure of resistance;" which was taken up and considered.

On motion of Mr. Wilson, the same was amended, so as to read as follows:

Resolved, That the tariff acts of congress for the protection of domestic manufactures, are unconstitutional, and should be resisted, and the other states be invited to co-operate with this state in the measure of resistance to the same.

And the question on agreeing to the resolution so amended, was on motion of Mr. Wilson, taken by ayes and noes, as follows:

AYES—Hon. Henry Deas, President—Messrs. Benbow, Black, Clendinen, Colvin, Davis, J. S. Deas, Dodd, Dubose, Ervin, Flagg, Glover, Graham, Griffin, Gregg, Hampton, Hart, Hugar, I'On, Jerman, Joyner, Johnston, Lehre, Patterson, Pegues, Pope, Richardson, Seabrook, Smith, Smart, Stewart, Sloan, Stone, Wilson—34.

NOES—Messrs. Conner, Evans, Grimke, Koger, Verdier, Witherspoon—6. So the same was agreed to.

We must confess our astonishment at this: And when we view it in connection with many other great and growing evils, both political and religious, little ground is left for the exultation either of the patriot or the Christian. The holy Sabbath is profaned by law, the authority of God is almost universally contemned, many of our rulers are not only infidels, but grossly profane and immoral, and christians contribute to their elevation; and in proportion as the divine goodness is lavished, so appears to be the wickedness of the people. Where, or when, has existed the people more highly favoured than is this nation? And where the one that has manifested a greater degree of ingratitude? "You only have I known," was the grand reason why God's ancient covenant people, suffered his severe but just judgments, for their ingratitude and rebellion.—They are to this day the monuments of divine justice, and a

living witness to the truth of divine revelation—a witness which confounds even infidelity itself. And if the punishment of national sins must be inflicted upon a people in their national capacity, surely the day of evil is approaching. Though as a people, the cup of our iniquities may not yet be full, though the divine forbearance be not yet exhausted, the day of retribution will not tarry. “*We be Abraham’s seed,*” was the vain boast of a once proud people, who took occasion from the distinguishing blessings of heaven, to commit all manner of enormities: but where are they now? “Scattered, meted out, and trodden down;” the prey of the uncircumcised; in most countries compelled to bear the burdens, but denied the privileges of citizenship. In the cities of Persia you may see them, says the Rev. Mr. Wolf, wandering about the streets, the most abject and pitiable of human beings, crying, *Poor Israls! Poor Israle!* and begging a scanty pittance to prevent starvation. Now, although in many respects, this peculiar people are, and forever will remain, without a parallel, yet there are not wanting in their history striking resemblances to our own. Did God drive out the heathen before them, that he might give them for possession a land flowing with milk and honey? So has he dealt with us.—Did they claim to be highly favoured of heaven? So do we.—Did they boast of their prowess in the field of battle, and of their national glory? So do we. Did they contemn the laws, and profane the ordinances of God? So do we. Did they say to the prophets, “prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits?” So do we. Hence the name of God is awfully blasphemed, his word neglected, the ordinances of his house despised, and his worship corrupted by human devisings. Many have assumed to themselves the office of the holy ministry, pretending, like the lying prophets of old, to an extraordinary or immediate call from God, and have caused the “people to err by their lies and their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them, saith the Lord.” Jer. xxiii. 32. Thus has vice been fostered until a black and fearful catalogue of abominations, which may be read on every page of our history, has grown up throughout the land, in all the ramifications of society, and in all the political and religious associations of men. Have we not reason, then, to fear that the following language of the prophet applies to us as a nation? “She hath changed my judgments into wickedness more than the nations, and my statutes more than the countries that are round about her; for they have refused my judgments and my statutes, they have not walked in them. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Because ye multiplied more than the nations

that are round about you, and have not walked in my statutes, neither have kept my judgments, neither have done according to the judgments of the nations that are round about you; Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold I, even I, am against thee, and will execute judgments in the midst of thee, in the sight of the nations." Ezek. v. 6-8.

◆◆◆
A correspondent has sent us the following extract of a letter from Professor Paxton, which we publish with the greatest pleasure:

"On the 18th of September, the ministers, preachers and students of our church, had a solemn day of Covenanting in this city. [Edinburgh.] In imitation of the church in the wilderness, and of our own country in reforming times, the old covenanters entered anew into the Bond, with their younger brethren; and it was confined to the ministers, preachers and students, in order to set an example to elders and private church members. Twenty-one ministers, seven preachers, and eleven students, (one of whom, was Mr. McGeeoch from the state of New-York,) joined in the solemn act of Vowing and Swearing with uplifted hands to Almighty God, in the presence of a very large assembly. We had people who came from different parts of the country to witness the scene, and of many different denominations. A deep and solemn interest was manifested in the countenances and demeanour of all present; and some of them declared afterwards, that they had never seen such a day on earth. It was indeed a most delightful season, and fondly do I hope that it may be the dawning of a new day in Scotland: a resurrection to the witnesses in your native land. We have reason to bless God for the consolation, but at the same time to join trembling with our mirth: to God alone be all the praise. He has indeed done great things for us, things which we scarcely hoped every to see again. He has thus enabled us to wipe away the reproach both of friends and foes. That with all our talk about covenants and covenant obligations, we were not better in practice than our neighbours. We have not acted only by such a stimulus but delayed proceeding with the duty, until we had revised, and re-enacted our confession of sins, and bond, and formed a confession of sins for the ministry. As soon as this was done, we lost no time in renewing our solemn vows. These details, I am sure, will give you and other friends in America, much satisfaction. We rejoice to learn that you are so soon to follow our example. May the Great Head of the Church pour down a full flood of the Holy Spirit's influence upon you all. There is bread enough in our Father's house, and to spare."

Professor Paxton says that when the news of our continued adherence reached them they were like men that dreamed. Their hands and hearts were encouraged, and it was indeed to them a reviving in their bondage. "The steadfastness of our brethren in America, diffused, says he, a general gladness over our church, and we glorified God in you: while our prayers ascended from every pulpit for a rich and copious blessing upon the ministers and people of your body."

◆◆◆
SINGULAR FACT.

The Georgia Messenger, in noticing the recent murder of Mr. Early in Texas, by Isaac B. Desha, says, that it is supposed that Early was the son of gov. Early, of Georgia, the same who, about two years since, murdered an individual in that state.—He made his escape, and the fact of his murder is the first that has been heard of him. It is singular that both Desha and Early should have been the sons of men filling the highest office in their respective states—that both should have committed murder—that both should have eluded justice—and that, meeting afterwards in a distant and comparatively unsettled country, one should fall by the hands of the other. It is a literal fulfilment of that passage of the Bible which declares, that "whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." There is something, too, like retribution in one murderer's becoming the victim of another. It is "even handed justice, returning the poisoned chalice" to the lips of one who had himself administered it to his fellow being.

Niles' Register.